ITALY AND THE MEDITERRANEAN

WORDS, SOUNDS, AND IMAGES OF THE POST-COLD WAR ERA

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& Valerio Ferme

Italian and Italian American Studies

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Italy and the Mediterranean

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Norma Bouchard and Valerio Ferme

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This is for our partners, Giorgio and Carl,
and our sons, Michael, Devin, Fabian, and Raphael.

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Introduction

A body of relatively calm waters, easy to navigate and bound by the contiguous shores of Europe, Asia, and Africa, the Mediterranean Sea has enabled extensive travels and peaceful interactions but also violent conflicts between people seeking to further trade, establish colonies, and wage wars. As a result, hybridization and exchanges have taken place between the diverse cultures, societies, and ethnicities that stretch from western Europe and the sub-Sahara to the Middle East and farther to the Indian Ocean and the Asian steppes. This remarkable interdependence between cultures that was already constitutive of the ancient Mediterranean has continued through history, turning the area into one of the planet's most vibrant networks of human interaction.

Despite the region's fluidity across natural and symbolic boundaries, various groups have tried to impose unifying and totalizing visions on this area. Between early and late antiquity, thalassocracies and empires competed for hegemony over the Mediterranean across a West-East axis. Early in the modern era, the confrontation was transformed into a North-South one. Following the discovery of the New World and the circumnavigation of Africa as a route to the East, the state systems of northwestern Europe matured into forms of capitalist organization. This development paralleled their self-fashioning into beacons of rational Enlightenment and into a burgeoning and civilized modernity understood as being sharply distinct from the social and cultural organization of southern and eastern Mediterranean regions. Between the late eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries, Occidental self-fashioning was wedded to insidious discourses of racial superiority that paved the way for and justified imperial claims over vast areas of the Mediterranean.

A new chapter in the history of the region began after the two world wars. Struggles for political autonomy, independent state formation, and nationhood swept through colonies and protectorates, and the Mediterranean became a central stage in the confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union. The end of the Cold War has not diminished the geopolitical centrality of the Mediterranean. Instead, the sea has become a frontier—a boundary that separates Europe from the underprivileged and economically disadvantaged people and political refugees who, often in makeshift vessels, cross its waters daily to escape from the Balkans and the East as well as from the Maghreb and sub-Saharan Africa. Contemporary European institutions

have done little to dispel the impression that the European Union, despite its
taunted supranational vision, remains more interested in promoting a neo-
liberal capitalist agenda and protecting the security of those living within its
borders than in fostering constructive and mutually beneficial relationships
with neighboring eastern and southern Mediterranean shores.

While European institutions have failed to advance models of belonging
that move beyond the exclusionary cartographies of national state sover-
eignty, these years have also witnessed the flourishing of alternative discourses
on the Mediterranean. Often emerging from the Mediterranean shores of
Europe itself, these discourses revisit a heritage of exchange and plurality
that complicates one's understanding of self and other. They also challenge
the universalizing assumptions of the Western model seen as the horizon
and teleological end point to which so-called premodern or not-yet-modern
societies should ultimately aspire.

Taking as our point of departure the premise that contemporary Euro-
pean discourses *on* and *from* the Mediterranean are best examined through
specific genealogies of national histories, cultures, and traditions, in *Italy
and the Mediterranean: Words, Sounds, and Images of the Post-Cold War* we ana-
lyze how the peninsula's Mediterranean positioning has been rethought in
a variety of fields from the end of the Cold War to the present. After offer-
ing a historical overview and a description of the broader conceptual and
discursive frameworks that animate contemporary readings of the Medi-
terranean (Chapter 1: "The Return to the Mediterranean in Contempo-
rary Western Thought: Old Contexts, New Approaches"), we focus on the
national particularities of the Italian case within an emerging transnational
Mediterranean paradigm. Organized in six sections, we begin with an over-
view of sociocultural discourses (Chapter 2: "Interlude: From Discourses
on to Discourses *from* the Italian Mediterranean.") The sections that follow
are devoted to contemporary Italian intellectuals (Chapter 3: "Geophiloso-
phies of the Mediterranean: From Massimo Cacciari and Franco Cassano
to Mario Alcaro and Beyond"); musicians and songwriters (Chapter 4:
"Sounds of Southern Shores: Musical Traditions and Adaptations in the
Italian Mediterranean"); filmmakers (Chapter 5: "Screening the Souths
through Southern Eyes: Revisiting Italy and the Mediterranean through
the Lenses of Globalization"); and writers (Chapter 6: "Writing the Medi-
terraneity of the Italian Souths"; and Chapter 7: "The Mediterranean of
Migrant, Postcolonial, and Exile Writers").

Chapter 1, "The Return to the Mediterranean in Contemporary Western
Thought: Old Contexts, New Approaches," provides the historical back-
ground for the mosaic of cultures, societies, and ethnicities that consti-
tute the Mediterranean network. We start at the dawn of the Classical Era,
when communities of traders emerged from the coastal region of Phoenicia
to establish routes for the exchange of commodities and material goods
while also spreading their customs and institutions throughout the north-
ern, southern and eastern Mediterranean shores. Phoenician communities
were imitated by the Etruscans and the Greeks, who, by the eighth century

BCE, had developed powerful city-states, expanding eastward toward Asia Minor and the Black Sea but also westward into Sicily, southern France, and Spain. The remarkable network of exchange that was at the heart of the ancient Mediterranean has traversed the region's history well beyond its origins, into our days. Yet thalassocracies, empires, state monarchies, and nation-states have sought, throughout this historical span, to unify extremely diverse spaces, attempting to transform this sea into a Roman, Muslim, Christian, or Turkish lake before turning the East-West divide into a North-South one through European colonialism and modern capitalism.

The Battle of Lepanto constituted a watershed moment in the political division of the Mediterranean between Eastern and Western spheres of influence during the sixteenth century. This same century was also crucial in changing European and world trade, with the discovery of the New World and the circumnavigation of Africa as a route to the East. The opening of new commercial routes and the cheap human labor and rich natural resources that came with these discoveries shifted the geopolitical balance of power within and away from the "sea between lands." The East-West axis that had been so important to the Mediterranean in prior centuries was transformed into a North-South one, with major consequences for both the western European shores of the Mediterranean and the eastern ones. As Europe increasingly defined itself as northern, Christian, rational, enlightened, civilized, and progressive (i.e., the "West"), its Mediterranean outposts became sites of patronizing discursive practices. By the early nineteenth century, with the evolution of Europe's monarchies into modern states, national consciousnesses emerged that were founded on territorial integrity as well as ethnic and racial boundaries. Hence, from Napoleon's expedition to Egypt in 1789 onward, the Mediterranean has become the stage for an expansion of European colonial power that placed the French in Algeria (1830) and in Tunisia (1881–1883) and the British in Cyprus (1878) and Egypt (1882). Soon thereafter, with the dismantling of the Ottoman Empire through the Treaty of Lausanne of 1923, the remainder of the non-European Mediterranean was colonized as well. In the interwar era, European modernity aggressively encroached the area. The consolidation of totalitarian regimes in Germany, Spain, and Italy gave new impetus to empire building sustained by Aryanism in Germany and the doctrine of Latinity elsewhere through the belief in the Greco-Roman genealogy of the Mediterranean that traverses Spanish, French, and especially Italian thought. In Italy, Benito Mussolini's Fascism mounted aggressive colonial campaigns, uniting Tripolitania and Cyrenaica as the *Colonia di Libia* ("Libyan Colony") in 1934 and establishing the empire of *Africa Orientale Italiana* ("Eastern Italian Africa") in 1936, which encompassed Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Somalia. Three years later, Italy invaded Albania, deposed King Zog Skanderbeg III, and declared colonial rule.

After World War II, as colonies and protectorates claimed independence and statehood, European states focused inward and oriented themselves toward federalism. Following the Treaty of Rome of 1957, the European Economic Community (EEC) was founded, with Belgium, France, Italy,

Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and West Germany as its members. Even then, countries like France retained ties with their former colonies (i.e., Morocco and Tunisia; Algeria was not yet independent), often to their detriment. In addition, during the Cold War era, the Mediterranean became the stage of political and economic confrontations and "neocolonizations": NATO bases were located in France, Greece, Italy, Spain, and Turkey, while the USSR held posts in Algeria, Libya, and Syria and retained strong ties with the Balkan states.

The end of the Cold War, famously symbolized by the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, once more transformed relationships in the Mediterranean. In 1992, with the Maastricht Treaty, the EEC evolved into the European Union, dismantling many internal borders in the pursuit of a supranational political vision sustained by an Atlanticist free market economy. These changes occurred in the midst of ever more complex relationships between the West and the Islamic world, aggravated by political tensions (e.g., the First Gulf War, the conflicts in Bosnia and Kosovo, and the rise of the Taliban) and by the arrival of migrants crossing the Mediterranean to escape troubled post–Cold War era conditions in the Maghreb, the Middle East, the Balkans, and Eastern Europe. In response, European states pushed for new Mediterranean accords, the most significant being the Declaration of Barcelona of November 27–28, 1995, whose objectives ranged from the promotion of shared economic well-being to the fostering of intercultural understanding between the European Union and neighboring Mediterranean states. The declaration was met with much skepticism, given the political and social context behind it. Mediterranean partnership was being advanced from the center to the periphery and to the advantage of European nation-states that were more intent in fostering the economic and financial well-being of the federation than in promoting better relationships within the Mediterranean region. The events of the Arab Spring of 2011 have lent additional legitimacy to these critiques, as, once more, "fortress" Europe has responded to Mediterranean crossings from Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia, and sub-Saharan Africa with xenophobia and racism.

The remaining pages of Chapter 1 thus document concerns about the current status of Mediterranean political and cultural relationships. From Barcelona to Marseilles, Messina to Athens, and even, across the ocean, New York to Toronto, scholars of the Mediterranean discuss this storied sea as a set of unstable relations—a space where material and intellectual culture, trade, and economic exchanges testify to the porous character of natural but also social, ethnic, and religious boundaries. Meanwhile, a growing Mediterranean artistic *koinè* questions the solidification of the region into Europe's southern frontier, reminding us that the Mediterranean has always been the place of vigorous exchanges and interaction—a region where frontiers are mobile confines, often traversed and therefore questioned and interrogated.

Since we focus on the Italian case, Chapter 2, "Interlude: From Discourses *on* to Discourses *from* the Italian Mediterranean," examines the histories, cultures, and traditions that have shaped past understandings of the Italian

Mediterranean, because they constitute the ground on which alternative representations and cultural knowledge develop. We begin charting this discourse with the Jesuits, who, shortly after their order's institutionalization in 1540, established their gravitational center in the Italian South, where they often transferred the alterity they discovered or read about through missionary work in Asia and America. In time, they construed the South as the "internal" Indies, or "*las Indias de por acà*," as testified by the *Indipetae*, a vast collection of letters they authored between 1589 and 1649. The Jesuits were very influential in creating a negative image of the South, which they disseminated through many publications but also through the *scholae* they ran. By the eighteenth century, the Jesuits' discourse on the South found new vigor in the writings of Grand Tour travelers, whose quest for the ruins of Classical antiquity made Italy one of their favored destinations. Italy thus became, in the work of Englishman Joseph Addington and Frenchman Charles-Louis de Montesquieu (and many others who followed in their footsteps), the site of destitution, indolence, and barbarism, as explained from the frameworks of climate, economy, and civilizational hierarchies.

This considerable body of writing did not find a counter in the peninsula's own travelers. In addition to the paucity of indigenous responses, Italian Enlightenment thinkers believed that poor governance caused backwardness and that, given the right government, the South could be rescued. The turning point came with the revolution of 1848, when perceptions about the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies as a place where reforms could happen were replaced by images of a land overrun by barbarity, corruption, degradation, and despotism. In short, the *questione meridionale*, or "southern question," was born. After the kings of Piedmont unified the peninsula in 1860, the *questione* consolidated into a persistent image of the South as underdeveloped, lacking civic consciousness, and unable to engage in any form of collective action. In addition, the positivist anthropology and criminology of Cesare Lombroso and his pupils reified southern diversity in biological terms by attributing inferior genes and even a natural predisposition toward crime to southern people. These prejudicial stances were eventually questioned by Antonio Gramsci, an attentive reader of the *questione meridionale*, whose own belief that the emancipation of southern masses depended on an alliance with the proletariat of northern urban centers fell short of displacing the totalizing discourses that predated his work.

The southern question remained somewhat bracketed during the fascist *ventennio* (1922–1943), but the fall of Mussolini and Fascism, and the urgency of postwar reconstruction and European integration, brought renewed energy to the question of the South as a place of intractable differences. Such postwar perceptions of southern immobility informed anthropological studies of the 1950s and 1960s, which detected the enduring presence in Mediterranean communities of premodern, sociocultural traits of patronage, familism, religious syncretism, magic, codes of honor, and shame. The notable exception was ethnologist Ernesto De Martino, who attempted to reconcile anthropology with history by arguing that magic and superstition

in southern Italian peasant societies expressed a measure of agency inasmuch as they were direct responses to threatening conditions that were historically and culturally determined.

The early 1980s brought broad critiques of the work of postwar anthropologists in Italy and elsewhere on the grounds that Mediterranean cultures were not only described as timeless spaces but also reified through an Orientalizing gaze. These years also saw the emergence of a new discourse *from* the South in *neomeridionalismo*, the body of revisionist interpretations of southern Italy published by scholars clustered around the *Istituto Meridionale di Storia e Scienze Sociali* founded in 1986. From their intense microhistorical work, a new image of the South emerged that underscored the region's economic vitality and reexamined anthropological formations, such as family networks and patron-client relationships, as sophisticated forms of social organizations rather than emblems of backwardness. This revisionism had limits, since the South remained framed by Modernization Theory and its attendant concepts of progress and development. Yet this work remains a fundamental point of reference for the contemporary thought on the Italian South and the Mediterranean that we pursue in Chapter 3, "Geophilosophies of the Mediterranean: From Massimo Cacciari and Franco Cassano to Mario Alcaro and Beyond."

The chapter begins by addressing the ideas of Europe and "Europeanization" ushered by the end of Cold War bipolarity to better illustrate the transformed epistemologies of Italy and the Mediterranean that traverse contemporary Italian thought. As the federation embarked on a process of unification to pursue a supranational political vision and a liberal capitalist agenda (seen as the only viable form of economic organization after the fall of the Berlin Wall), it also erected external boundaries to limit the arrival of extracommunitarian migrants and, in so doing, protect a mythical European identity under threat. While Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari, and Jacques Derrida were among the first to discuss the meaning of European identity and the implications of a Europe that was rapidly becoming a "fortress," by the mid-1990s Massimo Cacciari and Franco Cassano became central participants in this geophilosophical debate. For Cacciari, Europe is a paradoxical creation—an entity born from the separation of Greece from Asia, the other from which Greece sought to differentiate itself but without which it could not exist. Particularly important is Cacciari's discussion of the geosymbolic function of sea and land in the Greek *nomos* ("rule" or "control"), whereby land limited the expansionist reach enabled by the sea and therefore contained the potential *hubris* of thalassocracies. Cacciari notes that this *nomos* was abandoned in the early modern era as navigation extended to the unbounded waters of the ocean. Thus he argues for the importance of recovering these forms of Greek thought in a process of anamnesis of Europe's Mediterranean past. This process, as he further contends, can help limit the expansionism of late capitalist modernity and facilitate the creation of a polycentric, multicultural Europe—a federation founded not on ethnic, religious, or cultural belongings but on the

awareness that the other is complementary to the self and that difference is part of sameness.

Cassano's thought develops from the premise that Europe is an Atlantic fiefdom rather than a late declination of the Greek heritage. Therefore, he conceives of the South as the place from which to question Atlanticist Europe while bringing forth a set of alternative values. The northern capitalist belief that growth and economic development could spread to all corners of the world finds, in the imperfect modernization of the South, in the devastation of its urban and natural landscapes, and in the malfunctioning of its institutions and deteriorating civic consciousness, its essential counterpoint. This devastating assessment of modernity and of the Occidental episteme on which it rests does not translate into an abdication of sociopolitical and cultural agency but articulates a discourse on the Mediterranean as an archive of redeemable values and traditions. Like Cacciari before him, Cassano reflects on the Greek cultural heritage of the Mediterranean while criticizing the misuse of its legacy (especially in the formulations provided by Nietzsche and Heidegger) and endorsing the reflections on difference and contradiction that he finds in Pier Paolo Pasolini's *opus* and in the writings on "*pensée du midi*" of the Algerian-born Albert Camus.

After noticing the reflections of other thinkers on the Mediterranean whose ideas parallel and grow in different directions from Cacciari's and Cassano's (i.e., Francesca Saffioti, Giuseppe Cacciatore, Mario Signore, Pietro Barcellona, and Mario Alcaro), we return to Cassano's latest writings and discuss how his geophilosophy has stretched past the boundaries of the Italian Peninsula toward the Mediterranean as an amplified symbolic space that encompasses other areas, cultures, and traditions: the Caribbean of Edouard Glissant; the Asia of Homi Bhabha, Dipesh Chakrabarty, Ranajit Guha, Gyan Prakash, Amartya Sen, and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak; the Latin America of Boaventura de Sousa Santos, Edgardo Lander, Walter Mignolo, and Anibal Quijano; and the northern and sub-Saharan Africa of Chinua Achebe, Mohammed Arkoun, Nelson Mandela, Wole Soyinka, Aminata Traoré, and Ngugi wa Thiong'o; but also the theoretical and practical programs of crosscultural *translatio* and intercultural dialogue emerging from the neighboring Islamic world. This work ultimately exemplifies how Italian geophilosophical reflections can transcend identity politics for an intercultural practice that turns religious, ethnic, and cultural divides into the occasion for mutual enrichment and fruitful encounters.

Proceeding in our examination of sites of cultural production, we explore renegotiations of Italy's Mediterranean location in contemporary Italian music, the topic of Chapter 4, "Sounds of Southern Shores: Musical Traditions and Adaptations in the Italian Mediterranean." We begin by describing how Italy, as a *locus* of migratory exchanges, conquest and domination by foreign people, and ports dedicated to merchant traffic and navigation, has always encouraged the Creolization of its music. However, the mobilization of this rich cultural history is a fairly recent phenomenon, first highlighted through the work of Fabrizio De André, who, in the album *Crêuza de mä*

(1984), chose Genoese dialect to evoke the seafaring republic's rich history of commercial trade and intellectual contacts with the Arab-Islamic world of the Levant, *al-Andalus*, and the Ottoman Empire. De André's arrangements, however, reproduce Arab and Middle Eastern sounds from a Western perspective. More varied outcomes emerge in the work of Franco Battiato and Pino Daniele. Battiato integrates Western instruments with their Middle Eastern and North African counterparts in successive albums as his lyrics become progressively engaged in a critique of Western capitalism and commercialization. A different experimentation lies at the core of Pino Daniele's music making. Drawing upon the rich heritage of Neapolitan music, which encompasses Arab and sub-Saharan rhythms through a history of Spanish domination, Daniele fuses Neapolitan lyrics with the syncopated rhythms of jazz and the melodies of blues in albums like *Terra mia* (1977), *Pino Daniele* (1979) and *Nero a metà* (1980). In progressive stages, Daniele advances the idea that Neapolitans share in the struggles of African Americans, an idea he repeats with different referents in *Musicante* (1984), where he consciously incorporates Cuban rhythms in his music to represent the shared history of Naples and Cuba as Spanish-ruled dominions. Daniele's successful incorporation of musical elements from the Mediterranean at large thus opened a path for the daring experimentations of younger musicians, including the groups Almamegretta and 99 Posse (both formed in 1991), for whom incorporating the rhythms of the Neapolitan tradition with techno, reggae (including its ragamuffin derivation), rap, and Arab sounds is emblematic of a Mediterranean music that, from Naples, lets itself be contaminated by the "otherness" of subaltern music beyond Mediterranean shores.

Pino Daniele, Almamegretta, and 99 Posse carry out the negotiations of Italy's Mediterranean identity through contaminations that move from the outside in. Other musicians evoke the syncretism within. Ever since cofounding the *Nuova Compagnia di Canto Popolare*, Neapolitan songwriter Eugenio Bennato has sought to recover the wealth of southern ethnic and popular traditions. If initially these experimentations were shaped by an archeological desire to preserve the music of Apulia, Calabria, and Campania, including the *taranta* and *tammurriata*, his more recent work incorporates rhythms from the Maghreb and sub-Saharan Africa within the traditional sounds of the *taranta* and *tammurriata*, an approach followed also by the band Sud Sound System, from Italy's Salento region. Sud Sound System recovers local notions of difference through music but superimposes on them a variety of sound registers. Thus local musical traditions and the concerns that they express (e.g., unemployment, immigration, the *questione meridionale*, and the corruption of the countryside) globalize the particular struggles of the Salento and of southern Italy, rendering their condition of subalternity a bridge toward the otherness of disenfranchised groups worldwide.

Chapter 5, "Screening the Souths through Southern Eyes: Revisiting Italy and the Mediterranean through the Lenses of Globalization," examines Italian cinema from the 1980s onward in light of the cinematic traditions that precede it: neorealism, comedy, and docufiction. Early films about the South,

such as Visconti's *La terra trema* and Rossellini's *Paisà* but especially *Stromboli* and *Voyage to Italy*, evince underlying discourses shaped either by northern concerns or by a perspective that sells short the complexity of southern experience. Countering these representations are the directors on which we focus in this chapter. Though many more contribute complex representations of the identity and geopolitics of the South, those we discuss have produced films on the South that most vividly display the tensions between Western and Mediterranean thinking. The Sicilian Ciprì and Maresco are emblematic in this sense. Their portrayal of southern urban disaffection screens the horrors visited on the island by the direct impact of modernization and, somewhat less centrally, its corrupted developments through the Mafia. Yet, despite their postapocalyptic visions, the directors still offer an empathetic gaze for those whom the rat race of history fells by the wayside.

Empathy is also crucial to the work of Calabrian filmmaker Gianni Amelio, who, by revisiting the South's own history of migration and emigration, probes the disappearance of an ethical sense of responsibility toward the other in Italian society, which he associates with his own southern cultural heritage. In doing so, he underscores the erasure of differences between southern and northern culture enacted by modernization while also suggesting that one of the alternatives might be the heroic communion with the other expressed by the French author Albert Camus. The Roman director Matteo Garrone similarly shows that an erasure of differences traverses Italy's contemporary experience as new immigrants from the "Souths" of the world join indigenous Italians in the alienation they experience in urban and suburban Italian environments. The less-known Edoardo Winspeare, instead, balances his work between representations of the Salento, its traditions and its cultural richness, and the "deculturation" experienced by the Italian South through its encounter with globalized modernity. The "Westernization" of traditional worlds is also important for Emanuele Crialese, a director who has represented, more than others, the interactions of people and sea in the Mediterranean. Crialese's vision refrains from idealizations of the South offered by some southern directors and provides a complex reminder of what the Mediterranean was and still is for its inhabitants: a place of emigration and immigration and of natural and social upheavals—but also the locus of cultural traditions and forms of knowledge that run counter to Western epistemologies.

In Chapter 6, "Writing the Mediterraneity of the Italian Souths: Vincenzo Consolo, Carmine Abate, and Erri De Luca," three accomplished authors provide the background on which we discuss Mediterranean concerns in Italian writing (e.g., fiction, essays, and poetry). The Sicilian writer Vincenzo Consolo engages Classical culture, particularly the epic journey of Homer's *Odyssey*, to express his vision of the Mediterranean. For Consolo, the *nóstos*, the long and torturous journey undertaken by Ulysses after the Trojan War, does not lead home to Ithaca and Penelope but rather to an endless wandering through Sicily and beyond to record the open wounds and the painful lacerations of the Mediterranean. Modernity not only has defaced the region through the unbridled forces of capitalism and technology but

has transformed it into a rigid frontier, delimited by walls, boundaries, and divides that cannot be easily bridged. Despite this vision, there also emerges in Consolo's writing a commitment to recover the social, political and cultural ruins that bear witness to a common Mediterranean history and experience that has been exiled from our collective memory. Such history encompasses the violence of Greek, Carthaginian, and Roman wars; Arab invasions, Norman dominion, and Christian crusades; and piracy, slavery, imperialism, and colonialism. Yet Consolo brings to light the more positive aspects of Mediterranean encounters recorded in the island's art, architecture, customs, and labor. To this positive vision of the Mediterranean as a space enabling limited but precious resistance to conflict, strife, and barbaric regressions belongs also Consolo's expressionism, a plurilinguism that opposes the poverty and the amnesia of the referential, normative language of modern mass consumerism and indicates the emancipatory possibilities that recovering the fragments of a shared Mediterranean heritage might still offer the future.

Carmine Abate, the ethnic Albanian writer from Calabria, employs plurilinguism and oral intonations in his early work to revisit, through diachronic parallels, the traditions of cultural *métissage* and imbrications that are the heart of the Albanian-Italian experience in the Mediterranean and its pattern of emigration northward. In recent novels, Abate continues these explorations, though the changed landscape of his homeland due to developments in and on the Mediterranean (e.g., the waves of immigration from Albania and northern Africa, the pervasive corruption of the landscape through illegal construction financed by the *'Ndrangheta*, and the colonizing of Calabria's once pristine shores) expands his reach into reflections about the courage of one's ancestry and the necessity to uphold traditions. In this sense, his last novel, *La collina del vento*, a multigenerational, fictional account of his own family, reflects on the Mediterranean roots of his people and land, tying them, in a gesture reminiscent of Consolo, to the antiquarian relics of Magna Graecia and the protagonist's own *nóstos*, though Abate's faith in the power of community elicits more positive outcomes.

Neapolitan novelist, essayist, and poet Erri De Luca engages in a broader connection with the Mediterranean. Through the painstaking elaboration of language, style, and themes, De Luca exposes the "submerged ropes" that tie his adult experiences (as a leftist extremist, laborer, and aid worker) to his childhood and to Mediterranean forms of kinship on which he believes his identity and the identity of southern Italy are founded. As with the other writers we examine, contemporary themes of displacement emerge in the transformations wrought on the Italian South by modernization (e.g., forced migrations to the Americas and northern Europe, the disappearance of traditional occupations replaced by the despoilment caused to the South's landscape by heavy industry and the *Cassa del Mezzogiorno*, and the presence and abuse of immigrants arriving to Italy from the Souths of the world). De Luca's vision is ultimately pessimistic. While he finds in the virile ethics of Italy's southern past and in the atavistic wisdom of the Bible, decontextualized from its religious moorings, the *trait d'union* between far-ranging

experiences, which include those of "global Souths" well beyond the Mediterranean, De Luca believes that Italy's southern regions have become a nuanced shading of Western capitalism's reach, to which one can only oppose the communal sharing and heroic witnessing of the few.

We devote our last chapter, Chapter 7, "The Mediterranean of Migrant, Postcolonial, and Exile Writers," to discussing the role of Italy's migrant and postcolonial literature in present-day discourses on the Mediterranean. From the mid-1970s onward, Italy, like Greece and Spain (southern Europe's traditional emigration countries), has evolved into a destination country. The arrival of immigrants from the world's Souths has given life to a reactive mythology of Italian national identity based on imaginary notions of shared civic values, territorial belonging, and even common ethnicity that has generated a number of legislative edicts to control borders and reinforce frontiers. Italy's responses to migration are surprising since the country has always been characterized by a high degree of cultural, linguistic, and ethnic hybridity and because it experienced, during its foundational years as a modern nation-state, similar migratory movements of its people.

From the early 1990s onward, however, immigrants have inscribed their presence in the nation's consciousness through written words. The newest voices in the panorama of late twentieth-century Italian literature, migrant authors now encompass an ever-growing cohort. Among these, we explore the work of many comprising the first (e.g., Bouchane, Methnani) and second (e.g., Capretti, Ghermandi, Scego) generations. The testimonials of these writers give voice to experiences common to those of millions of Italians: the pain of uprooting; the sentiments of exclusion, prejudice, and violence; and the struggle to attain legal status while coming to terms with diasporic identities straddled across their past and present circumstances. But these works also carve symbolic spaces capable of recovering the self from its status as other and affirming its humanity, even as it is trapped and culturally effaced in the economy of the host country, lying as it does outside the juridical categories of modern Italian and European state sovereignty.

Overall, our work summarizes contemporary Italian discourse *from* the Mediterranean and reflects on the role it plays in the creation of communities of readers, listeners, and spectators. Witnessing *from* the Mediterranean calls into question specters of civilizational clashes by highlighting the current caesura of the region and restoring its history of multiple legacies and intertwined identities. It is also committed to coming to terms with the violence and traumas of nation building by critiquing hegemonic political projects, totalizing cultural representations, and discriminatory cartographies. As such, it interrogates interrogates Western modernization, examining not just its many positive effects on development but also its darker side: the exploitation of natural and human resources, which also have as their legacy colonialism and imperialism; the institutionalization of racism; the spread of militarism and warfare; and the ill effects of capitalist production, accumulation, and consumption on individuals, societies, and their environment. Such witnessing enables us to question the universalizing assumptions of the Western

model seen as the final horizon—the teleological end point to which so-called premodern or not-yet-modern societies should aspire. Finally, this project exposes the interdependence of cultures to complicate our understanding of self and other and challenges generally held assumptions in the alternative remapping we propose of Italy's Mediterranean spaces. In so doing, we testify to the role that culture plays in advancing models of belonging for communities of readers, listeners, and spectators that might transcend cultural, ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic boundaries erected by the institutions of post–Cold War European capitalist and globalized modernity to reaffirm their privilege.

CHAPTER 1

The Return to the Mediterranean in Contemporary Western Thought

Old Contexts, New Approaches

Since the 1980s, a vast corpus of artistic expressions and scholarly writings on the Mediterranean has animated Western culture. Filmmakers, novelists, playwrights, and poets express in their works Mediterranean themes and concerns, while scholars from Barcelona to Marseilles, Athens to Messina, and New York to Toronto organize conferences, publish essays and monographic studies, edit volumes, create journals, and launch Mediterranean institutes and research centers. Meanwhile, disciplines and degree programs—from geography, political science, and economics to anthropology, philosophy, and literature—revamp their curriculum and coalesce around new institutional and interdisciplinary cores called "Mediterranean Studies."

This conceptual and discursive framework arises from a transition whereby the concept of the transnational region has replaced that of the nation as a category of imaginary and critical understanding. Its sheer vastness, however, makes efforts to provide a synthesis daunting, legitimizing Predrag Matvejević's observation that the Mediterranean is suffering from an excess of discursiveness bordering on verbosity.[1] Nonetheless, this discursive attention provides a context in which to situate the widespread intellectual and artistic concerns with the Mediterranean that have emerged in contemporary Italian culture. This chapter thus introduces the Mediterranean as a system of interactions between diverse cultures, societies, and ethnicities coexisting with but also confronting one another across the waters of a landlocked sea. While aspects of Mediterranean interaction originated as early as the Bronze Age,

in the course of the region's millenary history, thalassocracies, empires, state monarchies, and nation-states have sought to unify extremely diverse spaces, alternatively aiming to transform this sea into a Roman, Muslim, Christian, or Turkish lake before the East-West divide turned into a North-South one with the advent of European colonialism and modern capitalism. However, in the changed geopolitical landscape of the post–Cold War era, revisitings of the Mediterranean place emphasis on unearthing past- and present-day crossovers, contaminations, exchanges, and border crossings, thus complicating our understanding not only of self and other but also of the Eurocentric epistemologies that sustain it.

Enigma Variations of Tectonic Geology

"What is the Mediterranean?" asks David Abulafia in the introduction to *The Mediterranean in History* before setting the geographical boundaries of the region as "the coastline that runs from the rock of Gibraltar along Spain and southern France, around Italy and Greece to Turkey, Lebanon, Israel and then the entire coast of North Africa as far as Ceuta, the Spanish town on the tip of Morocco, opposite Gibraltar" ("Introduction" 11). Abulafia's cartographic mapping soon fails him. "The Mediterranean," he writes, "cannot be simply defined by its edges," and the nature of this space remains one that "does not admit of a straightforward answer" (ibid.). Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell begin their monumental *The Corrupting Sea* with the same question but opt for a definition that encompasses not just its coastlines but also the land that stretches inland from the sea for several miles. Like Abulafia, however, they voice the challenge posed by a geographical definition of the Mediterranean: "Obviously, no single brief answer can be given to that question" (Horden and Purcell 10). The difficulty of defining the Mediterranean by way of its geography leads us to endorse Matvejević's description of the Mediterranean as a region whose borders are like the drawings of chalk, written to be erased and inscribed only to vanish.[2] Yet, despite eluding definitions, the Mediterranean has endured a long tradition of totalizing imaginings, visions, and hegemonic projects, of which geographical mappings and rigid cartographies are but one obvious expression. Not surprisingly, these imaginings, from the first millennium BCE to very recent times, have attempted to turn the fluidity of Mediterranean space into the object of cultural, social, and political coherence and homogeneity.

Perceptions of the Mediterranean as a bounded entity are as old as the recorded history of the region. While the name *mare Mediterraneum* only enters common usage between the third and sixth century CE (when it is mentioned in Isidore of Seville's *Etymologies* [12.16.1]), in ancient Semitic languages of the Levant the Mediterranean is already described as the "Great Sea," suggesting that its waters somehow constitute a single entity. This definition traverses antiquity, being recorded in the fragments of the philosopher Hecataeus of Mileto around 500 BCE (Horden and Purcell 10) and in Plato's *Phaedo*, where a single sea stretches "from the River Phasis [. . .] to

the Pillars of Heracles" (cited in Harris 11). It is also present in Aristotle's *De mundo*, where it becomes *he eso thalassa*, or the "internal sea,"[3] and in the Arabic image of a single water mass separable from the *al-bahr al-zulumat*, or "oceanic sea of darkness."

The Mediterranean's physical morphology, however, challenges univocal descriptions.[4] The region hardly constitutes a stable geographical entity and should more properly be seen as a "continuum of discontinuities" (Horden and Purcell 53). The waters that lie between the shores of Africa, Asia, and Europe are, in reality, a succession of seas,[5] marked by differences in degrees of salinity, depth, fish life, and temperatures. Likewise, the climates, landscapes, and topographies that surround this sea are varied. If the Mediterranean climate is frequently associated with mild winters and dry, hot summers, the region presents dramatic variations in temperatures and rainfall.[6] Similarly, Mediterranean topography reveals that the region is hardly uniform. Defined by James Macintosh Houston as "the enigma variations of tectonic geology" (51), the Mediterranean is equally home to the rugged, fragmented mountain reliefs of the Alps and the Pyrenees as it is to river basins, desert plateaus, dunes, lowlands, and rolling hills. The biodiversity of the region reflects this climactic and topographic variety. The plants and cultivars that are often adduced as examples of the Mediterranean landscape or as symbols of the region—the holly oak, the olive tree, the Aleppo pine, the scrub woodland of the *maquis*, the vine, the fig, the carob, the pistachio, the myrtle—are not only unevenly distributed (King, "Introduction" 5–6) but often not even native to the region, having been imported from Africa and the Near East, when not from central and southern Asia or as far as Australia (Rackham 48–49).

The Great River of Antiquity

An equally complex mosaic of cultures, ethnicities, and societies matches the region's diversity with regard to biology, climate, geography, geology, and topography, the result of historical contacts that have happened since Neolithic times. While Mediterranean societies were separate enough to develop distinct cultures, they also had unique means to interact with one another: the relatively calm and tideless waters of a landlocked sea whose currents facilitated navigation.[7] Thus, unlike the rugged Mediterranean terrain, from antiquity onward, the sea came to function as a "great river"[8] for communication and interaction, enabling peaceful as well as violent confrontations among people who sought to further trade but also establish colonies and wage wars: "The Mediterranean Sea acted as both route-way and barrier, at times dividing the cultures and people around its shores, at others providing the means whereby they might influence—or conquer—each other. Invariably, however, these confrontations and collaborations formed part of a broader process of human interaction" (Proudfoot and Smith, "Conclusion" 303).

By the eighth century BCE, interactions between diverse groups were a constitutive trait of the region, having started in the fourth millennium of the Paleolithic Period when Cyprus imported obsidian flakes from Anatolia and Malta brought metals to fabricate various utensils from Sicily, while the cities of Gerico and Çatal Hüyük (Anatolia) traded with regions around the Red Sea, Sinai, and Syria.[9] This early commerce was limited, and only during the Neolithic Period and Early Bronze Age did "space movement" and "system of circulation" become essential traits of the Mediterranean network.[10] From the Fertile Crescent and the riverboat trade on the rivers Tigris and Euphrates, as well as more directly from the Nile in Egypt, large quantities of goods that were necessary to support the societies of lower Egypt began circulating in the Mediterranean: cedars from Lebanon, bitumen from the Red Sea, and oil and wine from Syria. In the second millennium, the Syro-Lebanese (possibly ancestors of the Phoenicians) and the people of the Aegean or proto-Greeks exchanged customs, goods, ideas, and techniques, giving rise to a cosmopolitan society created on the interdependence between the diverse populations of empires and maritime cities.[11] In this system of exchange, the islands played a significant role. The Mycenaeans traveled frequently to the Tyrrhenian coast and reached Italy through the Aegean archipelago,[12] while the Cyclades and Rhodes functioned as links to Anatolia. Crete was the "'gateway' into the Mediterranean" (Suano 80), linking East and West in the commerce of raw materials and prestige objects. Catastrophic events at the end of the Bronze Age, however, led to the collapse of Cretan, Hittite, and Mycenaean civilizations.[13] The system of exchange they had created—what Abulafia calls the "first Mediterranean [. . .] whose scope had extended from Sicily to Canaan and from the Nile Delta to Troy" (*Great Sea* 59)—declined amid economic and political chaos.

Over the span of several hundred years, a new order arose. No longer centered on Asiatic empires, it relied on commercial networks created by communities of traders from Cyprus and the Levantine coast, as cities such as Arvad, Byblos, Sidon, Tyre, and Utica grew on the coastal region of Canaan or Phoenicia,[14] while Carthage, the Phoenicians' most important settlement in Africa, became a powerful player in its own right. Their inhabitants, who were speakers of "Ugaritian, Moabite, Hebrew, Aramaic and other Semitic dialects" (Suano 93), advanced westward. While they often subjugated weaker societies in the process, the Phoenicians did so not to impose political control but rather to secure a denser system of trade routes to consolidate their economic hegemony. These routes took them north via the sea and the islands of Cyprus, Crete, Malta, Sicily, Sardinia, and the Balearic; west via Otranto and the Sicilian coast; and east via Gibraltar. Through them, they exchanged wool and dyes extracted from the murex mollusk but also pottery, furniture, drinking vessels, ceremonial burners, caldrons, and jewelry produced by their highly skilled artisans and craftsmen. The importance of this merchant society extends beyond its considerable trading of commodities and material goods. The Phoenicians spread their alphabet in the Mediterranean while bringing to it an "Orientalizing culture" (Torelli 106) based

on models and institutions developed in Anatolia, Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Urartu that would become "an indispensable instrument for the exercise of power in the archaic societies that were evolving from primitive ideas of royal power towards domination by aristocratic elites" (ibid. 106–107).

In the sixth century, other merchant societies arose—most notably, the Etruscan and the Greek—that imitated the Phoenicians' models of trading by creating emporia throughout the Mediterranean coast while also competing for control of commercial routes to France, Italy, and Spain. By the eighth century, the Greeks had developed powerful city-states, or *poleis*, in the Cyclades, the Dodecanese, Macedonia, the Peloponnese, and Thessaly. These cities had autonomous identities and varied in size, social structure, and political structure, as the cultures of the most famous among them, Athens and Sparta (and later Corinth), testify. During the Iron Age (especially between 800 BCE and 395 CE), they became instrumental in the transmission of Hellenic culture, "bringing goods and gods, styles and ideas, as well as people, as far west as Spain and as far east as Syria" (Abulafia, *Great Sea* 83–84). They did so through migration and settlements but also through colonization, expanding eastward to Asia Minor and the Black Sea and westward toward Sicily, southern France, and Spain: areas already occupied by complex settlements of Phoenician origin. At first, the Greek *poleis* formed short-term alliances and confederacies to exert control over one another or to respond to threats of external aggression.[15] However, in 338 BCE, Philip II of Macedon established an imperial monarchy, inaugurating the evolution of Greek cities into territorial states. Statehood facilitated an unprecedented accumulation of resources that enabled Philip's son, Alexander (336–323 BCE), to expand Hellenic influence southward to Egypt but also east to Afghanistan, the steppes of Asia, and the Punjab on the border with India, effectively fusing "Greek culture [. . .] with the ancient cultures of Persia and Egypt" (Abulafia, *Mediterranean* 125). For some, this process of Hellenization even preceded the fourth-century creation of the Hellenistic world, since the economic and cultural prestige of the Greek city-states had been consolidated in prior centuries (Torelli 116). After the death of Alexander, his short-lived empire fragmented, and by 300 BCE three dynasties emerged: the Ptolemy in Egypt and the Levant; the Seleucids in Afghanistan, Syria, and Turkey; and the Antigonids in Macedonia.

VISIONS OF MEDITERRANEAN UNITY: THE ROMAN *MARE NOSTRUM*

To the west, Rome was growing from an undistinguished town in Latium into a monarchy, a republic (509 BCE), and finally an empire (29 BCE). As it grew, it superimposed itself on the civilizations that had flourished on the shores of the sea—Egyptians, Minoans, Mycaeneans, and Phoenicians—while incorporating the Italian Peninsula's Latins and Samians to the east and south as well as the Etruscans to the north and the thirty Greek colonies of Magna Graecia.[16] Over the time frame of the three Punic wars (264–146 BCE), Rome

defeated the Carthaginian heirs to the Phoenicians. It also captured Corinth, enslaving its inhabitants and sacking the city as an example of what happened to those who supported Hannibal. Concomitantly, Rome took advantage of the strife among the three Hellenistic kingdoms to gain control over the Mediterranean. Under Octavian Augustus, imperial Rome extended its rule over a vast expanse that stretched from Spain to Armenia, Kurdistan, and the Black Sea but also from Britain and the Danube basin to North Africa, and the Mediterranean Sea became a fundamental component of a process of unification envisioned by its emperors. The Roman Empire became the *oecumene*, the center of *orbis terrarum*, and the Mediterranean became its *mare nostrum* ("our sea"), the center of Greco-Latin culture and an integral component of Rome's hegemony.

Diverse strategies were initiated to achieve cohesion and unity in the region. Braudel notes, with some hesitancy, Rome's "'fair' policy" of granting Roman citizenship to people ethnically and linguistically nearby while reserving half-citizenship for those perceived to be more distant (*La méditerranée* 275). To further bind and control subordinate cultures, Rome promoted local elites to govern the provinces, often encouraging their upward social mobility in the empire itself, as exemplified by the emperor Trajan, a man born in the province of Spain in 52 CE. The Romans also put in place a system of political, social, and economic order sustained by Roman law and jurisprudence to tie the periphery to the center. Other strategies included an efficient network of communication and transport technology as well as an urbanization program based on the refurbishing of old cities—especially those of Carthaginian and Hellenistic origin in the eastern and southern Mediterranean—and on the creation of new Roman centers in western Europe,[17] whose repetition of the Roman *castra* topographic design was thought to facilitate the Romanization of the border regions. The extension of Latin as the official language of the empire and the legalization of Christianity in 313 CE by Constantine (as well as its promotion to state religion by Theodosius in 380 CE) achieved further levels of cultural cohesion and integration. The empire's totalizing vision did not cease with the scission of 395 CE into the Eastern and Western Empires ruled from Constantinople and Rome, respectively. While the Western Roman Empire collapsed after the Visigoths sacked Rome in 410 CE and Odoacer deposed Romulus Augustus in 476 CE, the Eastern Empire endured. Under Emperor Justinian, the Byzantine Empire reconquered many lost territories, including Italy and areas of the Maghreb settled by the Vandals from the fourth century onward, thus continuing to exert the hegemonic vision of Rome over vast areas of the Mediterranean.

Mare Nostrum and Mare Aliorum

By the seventh century, another group was advancing claims over the Mediterranean, seeking to transform the Roman *mare nostrum* into what would be perceived, from a Christian perspective, as a *mare aliorum*.[18] After the

death of the prophet Mohammed in 632 CE, the Arab Umayyads spread from Medina, in the Arabian Peninsula, to Syria and Palestine. From there, they moved in two directions: toward the eastern Mediterranean (Armenia, Asia Minor, and Iran) and toward the southern Mediterranean (including Egypt and the Maghreb). In 711 CE, Islamic Berbers, led by the general Tariq ibn Ziyad (who gave his name to the Rock of Gibraltar), advanced across the strait and occupied most of the Visigoth kingdom of Iberia, except for the North Atlantic regions of Galicia, Asturias, and the Basque Country. Iberia was renamed *al-Andalus* and was incorporated into the caliphate of the Umayyads and, after 750 CE, the Abbasids. Charles Martel, Charlemagne's grandfather, and his Frank armies eventually stopped the Arabs' advance into western Europe with the Battle of Tours of 732 CE. The Moors then directed their attention to Sicily, invading and annexing it between 827 and 859 CE. The conquest of Messina provided the Arab invaders with control of its straits and with a base for incursions to the islands of Sardinia and Corsica as well as other areas in the peninsula—namely, Calabria, Puglia, and even Rome, whose Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul they sacked in 846. As conquerors, the Moors imposed a system of land tenure and taxation on the indigenous populations of southern Italy. Yet they enabled many communities to retain their Christian or Jewish faith, even as Arabic culture and language became widespread and Islamization occurred.

Meanwhile, other Mediterranean lands of *dar-al-Islàm*[19] became the target of European expansionism. To these ambitions[20] belong not only the Crusades (1095–1291 CE) set in motion by Pope Urban II but also the Christian States of Outremer (Antioch, Edessa, Jerusalem, and Tripoli) created in 1099 CE; the expulsion of Muslims from the Balearic Islands, Corsica, and Sardinia; and the Norman invasion of Muslim territories in the Maghreb and southern Italy, where, after the Norman rulers were absorbed, through marriage, into the Swabian bloodline of the Holy Roman Empire, Muslims were often deported and massacred.[21] We should mention in particular the Fourth Crusade, when European Christian forces looted Constantinople in 1204 CE, sacking Orthodox holy sites, converting the population to Latin Catholicism, and dividing Byzantine treasures among Venice and Frankish nobility (Graham 83).

The Islamic invasion of the Mediterranean led to a long period of strife (the so-called *Reconquista*), which would end in 1492 when Christian forces defeated the remaining Islamic stronghold of Granada, deposing the last of the Nasirid emirs, Abu Abdallah (also known as Boabdil). At this time, the consolidation of the Spanish kingdom under Isabella and Ferdinand initiated a period of intolerance aimed at removing Jews and Muslims from this newly consolidated kingdom. Books and manuscripts were burned, works of art and architecture were defaced, and large-scale ethnic cleansing began. Starting in 1480, Jews who had already converted, or *conversos*, were subjected to the Inquisition. Moreover, blatantly disregarding their long presence in the Iberian lands, in 1492 the Spanish royals had the remaining Jewish populations expelled. Their properties were seized and their funds were used to

finance Columbus's expedition to the Americas, where this ethnic intolerance would be applied to Caribs, Tainos, and Native Americans. Initially, the Muslims were treated differently. Although the Spanish monarchs encroached onto Muslim territories with the occupation of Melilla (1497), Mers el-Kebir (1505) and Oran (1509) in the Maghreb, and then Bigiahya (Algeria) and Tripoli by 1510, the Spanish court continued to tolerate the practice of Islam, and Muslims could pay the Crown to escape the Inquisition. In time, the *moriscos'* conditions changed. In 1598, an uprising took place among the *moriscos* of Granada, who were under growing pressure to convert, speak Castillian, abandon their attires (including females' headscarves), and refrain from gathering at the baths or engaging in ritual forms of dancing. The *moriscos* were defeated and dispersed, with large Muslim communities surviving only in Valencia. While the court was aware of the economic impact of further dispersion, particularly for the textile and sugar industries, proposals were made to expel the Muslim population en masse from Iberia. The final edict of expulsion occurred in 1609 but was not completed until 1614. The estimate of the total number of Jews who left Iberia is 300,000, while more than 3 million Moors were forced into exile.[22]

As the *Reconquista* was taking place, another hegemonic vision for the Mediterranean had emerged, originating in northwest Anatolia. From 1299 onward, Turks from the Othman tribe[23] who had converted to Islam advanced westward. Having overthrown the sultanate of Egypt, Syria, and western Arabia, they captured the islands of Chios, Cyprus, and Rhodes as well as the North African territories of Tripolitania, Tunisia, and Algeria. In 1453, under Sultan Mehmed II, they conquered Constantinople and attempted to unify the Mediterranean through a form of government sustained by Islamic institutions, the *ulemah*. By 1500, they had seized mainland Greece and Macedonia and conquered Bulgaria and Albania, expanding into the remaining Byzantine holdings in the Balkans. The Battle of Otranto (1480–1481) halted instead their attempted invasion of Italy. In time, the Ottomans' advance would lead to more conflicts with Western powers, culminating in the Battle of Lepanto in 1571, when the "Holy League" of Catholic forces led by the Spanish Hapsburgs defeated their fleet. In 1578, the two political forces that fought at Lepanto entered a truce that was renewed every three years. Yet between 1500 and the Ottomans' unsuccessful siege of Vienna in 1683, this new empire gained vast spheres of influence both westward and eastward, controlling a vast network of commerce and trade that linked Europe's eastern Mediterranean with the Indian Ocean.

From East-West to North-South

The century during which the Battle of Lepanto became the symbolic stage for the confrontation between two political and ideological visions of the Mediterranean (West versus East—the *mare nostrum* versus the *mare aliorum*— and Christendom versus Islam) also witnessed major changes in European and world trade. The discovery of the New World and the circumnavigation

of Africa eastward by the Portuguese Vasco de Gama in the previous century
did not impact the Mediterranean immediately. Barcelona's dockyards kept
building ships to fight the Turks, and Catalonian cloth became a sought-after
commodity in the New World (Abulafia, *Great Sea* 441). Venice's lucrative
spice trade with the Levant continued, though it now faced competition from
the Portuguese, who were navigating the Atlantic and Indian oceans. Span-
ish silver and gold flowed to Genoa to finance Spain's war with the Dutch,
with the result that, between 1557 and 1627, the Genoese greatly profited
from the Spanish exploitation of the New World.[24] Yet, by the middle of the
seventeenth century, a North-South axis replaced the East-West one that had
been so important to the Mediterranean in prior centuries. Spain and Por-
tugal increasingly shifted their economic interests toward the Atlantic and
Africa, and northern Europe became the core of a new world system that
would transition to a capitalist economy, with England, France, and Hol-
land as its major maritime powers. Holland was keen to acquire the Vene-
tian wool trade, bypassing Spain and Leghorn, but soon became a major
player in the commerce of oil produced in Djerba, Puglia, and the Levant.
In return, the northerners brought wood, tar, copper, and codfish as well
as an array of manufactured products (Braudel, *La méditerranée* 181–182).
This shift had major economic consequences for the western shores of Medi-
terranean Europe, where the commercial power of the city-states eroded,
as did that of Spain, which, notwithstanding its expansion into the New
World and rule over areas of the Maghreb and southern Italy, found itself
relegated to the "semi-periphery" of an international economic hierarchy
(Graham 92).[25] Factors associated with "the emergence of centralized states
ruled by absolute monarchies" as well as with "the early stages of an eventual
capitalist world-economy" were essential in provoking this transformation
(Graham 75). Yet one cannot disregard the impact that the Reformation
(1517) had on the socioeconomic formations of Protestant and Christian
Europe: "Europe and the Mediterranean moved along diverging paths as
the spawn of Protestant and Catholic worlds [. . .] This divergence led to
different sets of values [. . .] Modernity and modernization were the origi-
nal products of Europe alone, with all that this implied: strong ties between
science and technology, the belief in the unlimited power of technology and
its capacity to mold nature to the wishes of mankind, the theory of prog-
ress, always positive assessments of economic growth and industrial capital-
ism" (Guarracino 165–166). As the state systems of northwestern Europe
matured, the trading and economic power of the Mediterranean continued
to decline. While Italy still exported salt and silk, transoceanic goods increas-
ingly showed in its markets. Coffee from the French West Indies replaced
Yemeni coffee from Egypt. "Tea from China, cotton cloth from India, sugar,
coffee and tobacco from the New World, gold from Brazil" also invaded the
markets (Black, "Mediterranean" 269). Inexorably, even the production of
manufactured goods declined, and the Mediterranean was relegated to being
the latecomer in the Industrial Revolution that would sweep the northern
European continent between 1780 and 1850.

The maturing of the state systems of northwestern Europe into modern capitalist organizations led to their self-fashioning into beacons of rational enlightenment and of a civilized modernity understood as being sharply distinct from the social and cultural organization of southern and eastern Mediterranean regions, giving impetus to the early modern tradition of "Mediterraneanism."[26] Between the early eighteenth century and the era of Romantic nationalism, this tradition would codify claims of civilizational superiority of northern versus southern regions to justify imperial claims over vast areas of the Mediterranean. For example, as Chapter 2 will explain, the eighteenth century witnessed the institutionalization by the English Crown of the *Grand Tour*, a journey toward Europe's Mediterranean South considered necessary for the scions of the elite to complete their education in the Classics. Given the disparity that these elites encountered between their idealized view of classical art and architecture and the social reality of the region, contemporary inhabitants of the Greco-Roman world were perceived to be unworthy heirs of their forebears, while "the sense that northern Europe had inherited the classical culture of those lands, envisaged as something clean, clear, precise, rational" began to grow (Abulafia, "Globalized" 281). As products of the Enlightenment, more benign writers of the eighteenth-century *Grand Tour* often commented on the corruption of the government and the misery of the people, while trusting in the teleological march of history toward progress that would be brought about by the reforms they advocated.

Concurrently, another facet of early modern discourses about the Mediterranean emerged in this century. Northern travelers belonged to countries where the shift to Atlantic trade had led to industrialization and scientific innovations. These led to related phenomena, such as the separation between public and private spheres of life, the loss of the sense of community, the new rationalization of human labor and the workday, and other sociocultural transformations. To their eyes, the preindustrial Mediterranean could offer a temporary antidote to the changes brought about by modernization. This vision shapes Goethe's view of the Mediterranean as a harmony of sky, land, and people, whose echoes traverse works by Schiller and Schlegel to reach Marx and Nietzsche. Otherwise stated, the "lazy" Mediterranean as temporary restoration for the body of the industrious North was born—the same vacation paradise of the *Club Méditerranée*, sought after by scores of northerners sojourning on French, Greek, Italian, and Spanish shores in the post–World War II era of mass tourism (ibid. 283–312).

The Imperialism of Western Nations

The discourses of the late Enlightenment and of Romantic nationalisms also fomented an insidious discourse of racial superiority as Europe's state monarchies consolidated into modern states, creating national identities founded not only on Westphalian models of territoriality but also on (presumed) cultural and ethnic homogeneity. Otherwise stated, in the era of nation-state

formation, biblical prejudices toward Jews, Muslims, and black Africans became reified in racial terms,[27] constructing the presumed superiority of northern civilizations while opening a path for a colonial hegemony over vast areas of the Mediterranean. Such process is recorded in Carolus Linnaeus's *Systema Naturae* (1735), where color determines the division of mankind into white Europeans, dark Asians, black Africans, and red Indians. It is later taken up by Robert Knox and Arthur de Gobineau. In *The Races of Men* (1850), Knox endorsed Linnaeus's classification and argued for the superiority of whites over other races. Most interesting for our purposes is the further breakdown that Knox proposed for white Europeans, dividing them into Celtic, Nordic, Sarmantian, and Slovenian groups. Like Knox, in *Essay on the Inequality of the Human Races* (1853–1855), de Gobineau propounded the superiority of whites, or Aryans, and made distinctions among white Europeans, viewing southern and eastern Europeans as degenerate—the result of a miscegenation spanning the course of centuries. Knox's and de Gobineau's views were extremely influential in England, France, and Germany, fueling the myths of Aryan supremacy and of the moral and intellectual superiority of whites over nonwhites that traverse discourses on nation and race by Thomas Carlyle and Ernst Renan among others. Thus, between the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the Mediterranean entered the wider European lexicon as a linguistic and cultural construct and became "both the origin and the contemporary theatre of European power" (Chambers 12). This theater of European power would play a part in the events that led to the Westernization and final dissolution of the Ottoman Empire.

As the eighteenth century came to a close, France, England, and Russia increasingly challenged the authority of the Ottoman Empire over an area that comprised Asia Minor, the Balkans, Egypt, Morocco, and North Africa. The empire, weakened by its failed siege of Vienna and the advance of Austria into the Balkans during the Long War (1683–1699), now had to confront the growing ambitions of Russia in the Russo-Turkish war (1768–1774). After the battle of Küçük Kaynarca,[28] the Russians extended their economic and cultural influence over Turkey and the lands surrounding the Black Sea. A few years later, in 1798, the Westernization of the Ottoman Empire began in earnest. Napoleon, already victorious in Italy, realized Talleyrand's vision of French hegemony in the Mediterranean with the expedition and occupation of Egypt (1798–1801). Soon thereafter, the Ottoman Empire, which came to be known as the "sick man of Europe," also lost control of Serbia (1817), Greece (1828), Moldavia and Wallachia (1856), and Bosnia, Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cyprus, and Crete (1878).

Some of these losses, such as that of Greece following its War of Independence (1821–1829), were the result of secessionist movements seeking to establish national sovereignty. However, the idea of national states founded on cultural and ethnic homogeneity was the result of Eurocentric epistemologies that had solidified between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[29] These same epistemologies fueled deeper European colonial advances into Ottomans' holdings after Napoleon's expedition into Egypt. The French and

British fleets defeated the Ottomans at Navarino (1827), and three years later in 1830, the French entered Algeria, gradually establishing their control over North Africa and replacing the Ottoman rulers in the region. Between 1830 and 1869, European nation-states limited their expansion as they controlled each other's presence in the Levant by propping up a declining Ottoman empire. Nevertheless, at the century's end, the French were in Tunisia (1881–1883), and the British were in Cyprus (1878) and Egypt (1882). In those years, particularly significant for the region were the creation of the Suez Canal in 1869 and the Berlin conference of 1884–1885. A French enterprise operated jointly by France and Great Britain until 1956, the canal provided the gateway to eastern Africa, the Indian Ocean, and the Far East, to the advantage of French and British economies. The Berlin conference sanctioned the hegemony of European colonialism as 14 countries discussed how to achieve the "white man's burden," the final partition of Africa among European nations. While this presumptuous encroachment of nineteenth-century colonialism gave rise to strong native resistance,[30] the Islamic world and the Ottoman Empire that guided it no longer rivaled the Europeans. Europe's victory, as Proudfoot explains, "reflected the Eurocentric nature of the nineteenth-century capitalist world-system, the technological advances which had allowed this to develop, and the economic, demographic, political and military power which Northern European states in particular derived from their role as the system's 'core'" ("Ottoman" 95).

Proudfoot's explanation is sound, but we should note that despite peripheral economic and political roles, two states outside of northern Europe partook in the colonial advance: Spain and Italy. With the treaty of Fès of 1912, Spain obtained the mountain region of Rif in Morocco, which it added to *presidios* of Ceuta and Melilla acquired in the fifteenth century. Newly unified Italy (1861) also sought northern and eastern African territories to establish its "rightful" role among imperialist European nations[31] and to provide a solution for its oversupply of labor and a large, landless peasantry. Moreover, territorial expansion into Africa meant the chance to restore Italy to the grandeur of Rome and to the prestige of the peninsula's maritime Republics.[32] By 1889, Italy occupied Somalia, which it followed with the invasion of Eritrea in 1890. Despite many catastrophic defeats,[33] Italy pursued its colonial ambitions and declared war on the Ottoman Empire over Libya (1911). By 1912, Italy proclaimed sovereignty over Cyrenaica and Tripolitania and occupied the Ottoman holdings of Rhodes and the Dodecanese Islands.

The colonial partition of Ottoman or Ottoman-controlled lands inaugurated the arrival of new waves of Europeans: first as tourists, eager to explore the ruins of ancient Mediterranean civilizations once France and England secured Algeria, Tunisia, and Egypt; and later as colons, especially in Algeria but in other areas of the Maghreb as well. The flow to Italian Libya instead remained limited because of a strong resistance movement against the Italian occupation. The apex of Western hegemony occurred after World War I, when the Ottomans, who had allied themselves with Germany and Austro-Hungary, were defeated and their empire was dissolved. As Abulafia recalls, in

dissolving the empire, the Allies' mistrust of the Ottomans was compounded by the 1915 mass deportation of Armenians from Anatolia, an episode that indicates how "the Ottoman government had turned its back on the old ideal of coexistence" (*Great Sea* 583). The Treaty of Lausanne of 1923 marked the birth of the Ottoman Empire's secular successor, the Republic of Turkey, while the Society of Nations put the Arab provinces of the empire under English and French mandates. Lebanon and Syria were assigned to France, while Great Britain controlled Iraq and Palestine, a land the English had already identified as the future home of Jewish people. Nations, often intolerant of outsiders, had replaced the Ottoman system that "despite the tensions and even hatreds that erupted between people and religions, and despite frequent attempts to humiliate Christian and Jews by imposing on them a variety of fiscal and social disabilities [. . .] had managed to hold together disparate people for several centuries" (ibid. 588).

The interwar era witnessed another encroachment of European modernity on the Mediterranean. The consolidation of totalitarian regimes in Germany, Italy, and Spain gave new impetus to aggressive empire building sustained by Aryanism in Germany and the doctrine of Latinity that traverses French, Italian, and Spanish thought. The French spokesmen of the doctrine were the right-winger Charles Maurras, cofounder of *École romane* and *Action Française*, and the writer Louis Bertrand. In their views, the legacy of the Greco-Roman tradition was located in present-day France, and thus the country's claims to the North African territories that had been part of Imperial Rome genealogy were fully justified. Latinity was also an important current of Italian and Spanish thought. In Catalonia, a strong idealization of the Greco-Latin Mediterranean evolved around the *noucentisme* movement, which, as the writings of Eugenio d'Ors illustrate,[34] negated the considerable influence of Islamic culture on Spain. The outbreak of the Spanish Civil War (1936) added a distinct anti-Muslim dimension to this vision of the Mediterranean. In an obvious allusion to the demise of *al-Andalus*, French right-wing ideologues hailed Franco's actions against the Left as a new *Reconquista* against the barbarism of the East. In Italy, the doctrine of Latinity reached new heights with the advent of Fascism in 1922 and its attempt to reclaim the *mare nostrum* of the Roman Empire as its legitimate geopolitical heir.[35] Fascism's ideology unfolded into a violent military campaign to end Libyan resistance, with Mussolini empowering General Rodolfo Graziani to end indigenous uprisings by any means, including mass deportation and the use of chemical warfare on civilian populations. As a result, the hero of resistance, Omar el-Mukhtàr, was hanged in 1931. In 1934, Cyrenaica and Tripolitania were united as the *Colonia di Libia*, and by 1936, Fascism proclaimed the empire of *Africa Orientale Italiana*, a territory that encompassed Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Somalia. Three years later, Italy invaded Albania, declaring colonial rule, while its ally, Nazi Germany, was beginning to implement the *Endlösung*—the genocide of millions of Jews, or the "Final Solution."

THE MEDITERRANEAN IN THE INTERWAR ERA

The interwar years of aggressive empire building and ethnic cleansing also witnessed the emergence of a vision of the Mediterranean that deeply informs the contemporary rethinking of the region. In the 1930s, writers from France and Algeria, including Amrouche, Audisio, Bertin, Brauquier, Camus, Charlot, Grenier, Sallefranque, and Valéry, started elaborating new ideas of the Mediterranean by revisiting the writings of the Saint-Simonians, including Emile Barrault, Michel Chevalier, Prosper Enfantin, and Pulin Talabot, who in the nineteenth century had sought to facilitate the exchange of scientific knowledge between eastern and western Mediterranean cultures. The impetus behind the initiatives of the Saint-Simonians had been the establishment of Mediterranean entrepreneurship, in the areas of technology, finance, and economy, that encompassed a dimension of cultural exchange between Arab, Greco-Roman, and Judaic civilizations. For example, in a series of articles published in *Le Globe* (1832), Chevalier described the Mediterranean as a complex ensemble of cultures and ethnicities capable of uniting divided people (Izzo and Fabre 28–51).[36] Like Chevalier, in *West and East* (1835) Barrault argued that the Mediterranean could facilitate exchanges and encounters. Though the outcome of the Conference of Berlin of 1884–1885 dealt the Saint-Simonians' inclusive vision of the Mediterranean a significant blow, its message was not lost to the writers of the 1930s.

In 1933, Paul Valéry established the *Centre Universitaire Méditerranéen* project to examine the cultural legacies of a region where astonishingly different societies had coexisted across the centuries, giving rise to continuities that could promote universal humanism. In his 1939 essay, "Freedom of the Mind," Valéry famously defined the Mediterranean as the matrix of the European spirit—a "machine" to create civilizations: "This basin [. . .] has been for centuries the theatre of mingling and contrasts of different families of the human race, enriching each other with all their varieties, their experience [. . .] Thus was built up that treasure to which our culture owes almost everything [. . .] we can say the Mediterranean has been a real *civilization-making machine*" (168–169). Like Valéry, Gabriel Audisio, in the journal *Cahiers du Sud* as well as in works such as *Le Sel de la mer* (1936) and *Jeunesse de la Méditerranée* (1935), promoted the Mediterranean as a site of exchanges between societies and ethnicities while rehabilitating North African Arabic culture, especially Algerian theater, against the Orientalism of Maurras and Bertrand. Audisio's activities rapidly placed him at the center of a group of intellectuals who, in the 1930s, voiced the idea of the Mediterranean as a place that could abolish the cultural and ethnic frontiers that endured in colonial society (Témime 89). Among them was Albert Camus, who, in 1937, on a European background marked by dictatorship, empire building, and racial intolerance, delivered the famous lecture "The New Mediterranean Culture." There Camus critiqued the European empire building of Fascism and Nazism and outlined a humanistic respect for the other to be rediscovered in the cultures of the Mediterranean. Warning that

his was not a "nationalism of the sun" (190), he questioned the doctrine of Latinity and hailed the cosmopolitanism of the region, a place where East and West met, in an "internationalism [. . .] no longer inspired by a Christian principle, by the Papal Rome of the Holy Roman Empire," but by "man" (ibid.). To these intellectuals, we must add the name of arguably the most important historian of the twentieth century, Fernand Braudel. A resident of Algiers from 1923 to 1932, Braudel devoted his life to the history of the Mediterranean, authoring, among others, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* in 1949, a work that is a crucial point of reference in the contemporary epistemology of the region.

Influenced by the *École des Annales* of Marc Bloch and Lucien Febvre, Braudel's approach to Mediterranean history focused on civilizational continuities—what he called *histoire de longue durée*—as opposed to the history of local events or *historie événementielle*. This allowed him to identify patterns of "unity and coherence of the Mediterranean regions" (*Mediterranean World* 14) that endured until the death in 1598 of Spanish King Philip II. Braudel stressed structural permanence over change in time, and *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World* was a response to those who argued for a historical and cultural caesura in the Mediterranean resulting from changing geopolitical unities. These included Henri Pirenne, who, in *Mahomet et Charlemagne*, published in abridged form in 1922 and then posthumously in 1935, had claimed that the barbarians' invasions between the fourth and sixth centuries had not altered the unity of the Roman world, whose demise was instead caused by the rise of Islam between 650 and 750, when the *mare nostrum* had become a Muslim lake that divided the Islamic East and the Christian West.

Unlike Pirenne, Braudel focused on relationships between civilizations and cultures, and his vision of the Mediterranean shared many concepts with the Saint-Simonians and with those advanced by the intellectuals of the "Algiers School": "Braudel values the pluralism of cultural heritages that give life to Mediterranean civilization. Greek and Latin traditions interact with Judaic culture and the Arab-Islamic world, thanks to, among others, the fruitful mediation of the Spanish Jews and the *moriscos* [. . .] In this interpretative key, the Mediterranean acquires a retrospective legitimacy as a 'global' historical entity that deserves to be studied for itself, as a sort of 'historical character' that imposes itself as a protagonist" (Zolo 15).[37] While one cannot but agree that, with Braudel, "the question of the Mediterranean acquires a status that is unquestionably and irreversibly scientific" (ibid.), the most innovative aspects of his thought were not fully understood until recently. In the post–World War II era, Braudel's writings shaped the inquiries of anthropologists who searched for sociocultural unities of the Mediterranean based on shared structural traits in the societies of Greece, Italy, Spain, and North Africa. These traits (e.g., codes of honor, familism, magic rituals, patronage, religious syncretism, and shame) were understood as forms of resistance and survival to modernization. In this sense, the postwar anthropology of Banfield, Campbell, Peristiany, Pitt-Rivers, and others not only was based

on a renewed understanding of Braudel but also bore the traces of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Mediterraneanism, inasmuch as the people and cultures of the region remained the Oriental others of Western progress, development, and modernization.[38]

The Difficult Scene of Decolonization: The Mediterranean of the Cold War Era

The years after World War II initiated a new chapter in the history of the Mediterranean that would lead to radical transformations in the area. Partially aided by the rise of Western ideals of freedom and equality and by the Atlantic Chart of 1941,[39] struggles for political autonomy and independent nationhood swept through colonies and protectorates. From 1945 to the 1950s, independent Arab states were established, though they retained strong economic ties with former colonial powers. Syria and Lebanon were established in 1945; Libya and Egypt became nations in 1951 and 1952, respectively; and, in 1956, Morocco and Tunisia were formed. However, when in that same year President Nasser of Egypt nationalized Suez, England and France intervened militarily. Nasser was defeated, but Egypt gained a prestige in the Arab world that compromised England's and France's political standing. Egypt would also assist the Algerians in their long fight for independence from 1954 to 1962, which was sealed by the treaties of Evian. The geopolitical upheaval brought about by the independence of French colonies resulted in massive flows of Christian and Jewish but also Muslim migrants from Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia to major French cities. This exodus transformed the anthropological reality of France, especially in its southern regions, with the result that, as Abulafia recalls, "rather than creating a new *convivencia*, the presence of a teeming North African population unlocked ugly, xenophobic sentiments" (*Great Sea* 622). The British departed from Cyprus in 1960, when the island became a republic, before the resurgence of ethnic conflicts caused it to be divided and placed under the shared control of England, Greece, Turkey, and the United Nations. The Arab League, established in 1945, grew to include Libya (1953), Sudan (1956), Morocco (1958), Kuwait (1961), Algeria (1962), South Yemen (1967), and Bahrain, Qatar, Oman, and the United Arab Emirates (1971).

The creation of the state of Israel in British-mandated Palestine probably produced the greatest change in the geopolitical landscape of the Mediterranean after World War II. Ratified by the United Nations in 1947, the existence of the new state led to massive arrivals of Jews from Eastern Europe and neighboring countries. In turn, this immigration created a problem with Palestinian refugees.[40] The Cold War's bipolar divide aggravated the complex politics of the region, as the confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union, simmering since the 1940s, played out in the division of the Mediterranean across opposing ideologies. Following World War II and the loss of colonies and protectorates, European states focused inward and oriented themselves toward integration. Such process led to the Treaty

of Rome of 1957, when the European Economic Community (EEC) was founded, with Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and West Germany as its members.[41] While the aim of the Treaty of Rome was to create intra-European commercial policies, relationships with Mediterranean countries outside the EEC were maintained, since countries like France maintained ties with their ex-colonies. In addition, because the EEC was convinced that "economic prosperity through free trade would foster political stability" (Jones 156)[42] while ensuring a steady supply of oil to European postwar reconstruction, agreements were also stipulated with Egypt (1969), Lebanon (1972), Malta (1971), and Cyprus (1972). Following the crisis of 1973, ushered by the war of Yom Kippur, the geopolitics of oil production and exchange reached new heights as Arab states increased prices while diminishing production. Responding to these events, the EEC began to develop a "Global Mediterranean Policy" that would deal more comprehensively with the region (ibid. 157–158). Other initiatives were also launched, including the 1973 "euro-Arab dialog" of the European Commission (Bono, *Un altro mediterraneo* 158–159), which sought to address the Palestinian Question, inviting Israel to leave the territories occupied during the Arab-Israeli war of 1967.[43] Despite these initiatives, the Mediterranean of the Cold War era remained the stage of political and economic confrontation between the United States and the USRR: NATO bases were located in France, Greece, Italy, Spain, and Turkey, while the USSR had posts in Algeria, Libya, and Syria; Balkan states such as Albania and Yugoslavia retained strong ties with the USSR and Eastern Bloc countries.

Europe and the Mediterranean after the Bipolar Divide

Membership in the EEC grew in the 1980s, with Greece joining in 1981 and Spain and Portugal joining in 1986. While the geographical presence of Greece and Spain in the Mediterranean rendered the region more significant for an enlarged EEC, the most important event of the 1980s was the end of the Cold War. Following the disintegration of the USSR in 1989, many Eastern European countries began a process of relative democratization leading toward pseudocapitalist models of economic organization. Yet, after early euphoria engendered by the end of bipolarity and the belief for some that Western capitalism was the world's manifest destiny,[44] it became clear that the fall of the Soviet Union had inaugurated an era of unstable world politics. The collapse ended the "checks and balances" status between socialism and capitalism, as the United States rose to hyperpower status while seeking to establish a world order defined by civilizational boundaries like those proposed by Willy Claes and Samuel Huntington. Claes, then NATO's secretary general, pointed to Islamic fundamentalism as the threat awaiting Europe and the West (Zemni and Parker 234), thus igniting latent fears of Islam among European nationals. Huntington did much to spread and disseminate these fears, first in the essay "The Clash of Civilizations?" (1993)

and then in the book by the same title, where he eliminated the question to turn uncertainty into dogma.

As the EEC evolved into the European Union with the Maastricht Treaty of 1992, it dismantled many internal borders to pursue a supranational political vision built on an Atlanticist free market economy. These changes occurred in the midst of ever-growing complex relationships between the West and the Islamic world, aggravated by events such as the First Gulf War, the ethnic cleansing of Bosnian Muslims by Serbia (a genocide occurring on Europe's doorstep), the conflict in Kosovo, the rise of the Taliban, the Islamophobia that gripped the United States after September 11, 2001, and the retaliatory, preemptive war that George W. Bush unleashed during his presidency. The magnitude of these events, and the reification into cultural divides of social and economic disparities between Europe and neighboring Muslim countries, elicited many concerns about the future of Europe's relationships with countries on the eastern and southern Mediterranean shores.[45] Thus several European states pushed for a new "Global Mediterranean Policy" that would include economic assistance to Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, and Tunisia (Jones 160; Bono, *Un altro mediterraneo* 162). There were also initiatives to support Mediterranean networks, whose objectives ranged from improving urban planning, transport, and management of energy and natural resources to facilitating cross-border trade and communication.[46] In this sense, Ian Morris correctly identifies the interest in the Mediterranean as an effect of globalization—a "Mediterraneanization"[47] that reflects Europe's southward pursuit of goods, people, and ideas through the political and economic unification of the Maastricht Treaty. Conversely, Europe was erecting external boundaries in the context of the Schengen Agreement (signed in 1985 but implemented only in 1995) to contain the flow of immigrants across the Mediterranean as they escaped the troubled conditions of post–Cold War era states in the Maghreb, the Middle East, the Balkans, and Eastern Europe. The magnitude of these migrations led the European Union to the 1994 formulation of a "Euro-Mediterranean Economic Area" of free trade and to gather the 1995 Barcelona Conference, attended by 15 EU countries, 11 Mediterranean states (Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey), and the Palestinian Authority. This conference produced one of the most significant documents of the 1990s: the Declaration of Barcelona of November 27–28, 1995.[48] Its objectives are the promotion of security, peace, and stability; the fostering of shared economic and financial well-being; and the facilitation of intercultural understanding and cooperation between Europe and the Mediterranean, which emphasizes dialogue to foster better comprehension and perception of diversity in a multicultural, pluralistic world.

Given the context that gave impetus to the declaration, its objectives were met with skepticism. Bono argues not only that they were paternalistic (*Un altro mediterraneo*)[49] but also that they prioritized the liberal tradition of capitalism embraced by the European Union and issues of security for those living within the Schengen zone.[50] Moreover, the objective of intercultural

dialogue described a rather generic exchange between diverse people and cultures but never stressed their shared history of values derived from participating in common Mediterranean experiences. In addition, Bono maintains that intercultural dialogue must develop precise strategies to effectively "counter anxiety, ignorance and prejudices on all sides" (ibid. 175).[51] After ten years, in 2005, the declaration was still being criticized for not countering the view that the Mediterranean jeopardizes the financial stability and security of Europe's citizens. More fundamentally, the Mediterranean partnership proposed in Barcelona is flawed, since it flows from the center to the periphery and to the advantage of European nation-states with little resonance in the Arabic and Islamic world. Dimitri and Kalypso Nikolaidïs summarize this well, noting that the partnership has remained "centered on the EU itself, designed and financed by the Union, which also conceives the method, the objectives, and the different steps of the process: the EMP is a neocolonial practice wrapped in a postcolonial discourse" (344). A more recent accord, the "Union pour la Méditerranée" of 2008, is mired in the same unilateralism, since free trade and political stability are its main driving forces. Mediterranean states like Turkey have perceived it as a substitute for the European Union's continuous refusal to accept them as members (Abulafia, *Great Sea* 638–640; Cameron 261–262). This refusal, articulated by Philippe de Villiers among others,[52] indicates a deep-seated fear that admitting Turkey, a country of 65 million Muslims, into the European Union will compromise the values professed in the Charter of European Identity: "Europe is above all a community of values [. . .] Fundamental European values are based on tolerance, humanity, fraternity. Building on its historical roots in classical antiquity and Christianity, Europe further developed these values during the course of the Renaissance, the Humanist movement, and the Enlightenment, which led in turn to the development of democracy, the recognition of fundamental and human rights, and the rule of law" (Zemni and Parker 231). Although the concerns that Kemalist Turkey has not upheld basic values such as "tolerance, humanity, [and] fraternity" are valid, the inclusion of Greece, Portugal, and Spain—states led by militaristic and fascist regimes until the 1970s—indicates an "ideological framework" underpinning not only inclusion but also "exclusion" (ibid. 232). Identifying these values as "European" also obfuscates the legacy of colonialism, racism, slave trade, and genocide. More problematic is the Charter's affirmation that Europe's identity is Christian. As the history of *al-Andalus*, Judaism, Malta, Sicily, the Ottoman state, colonialism, exiles, and diasporas testify, Judaism and Islam are inextricable components of Europe's cultural legacy.[53] Recent migrations of Muslims to Europe are but the latest chapter of a long history that has made Islam Europe's second most common religion, with over 15 million practitioners.[54]

The Arab Spring of 2011 has lent additional legitimacy to critiques such as those articulated by Turkey and other states on the Mediterranean borders. Europe has responded to crossings from Egypt, Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia with xenophobia and racism. The granting of EU membership to Croatia (2012) while talks of inclusion continue with other Balkans states

with sizable Muslim populations, such as Montenegro and Bosnia, has done little to dispel the notion that the European Union continues to pursue an imaginary identity as a Christian federation. However, the financial and political crisis that has rocked southern European states such as Greece, Italy, and Spain, and the mounting friction between these states and the Franco-Germanic core, has cast a dark shadow on the political and economic future of the federation as threats of expulsion from the eurozone underscore deep-seated tensions, foregrounding the challenges that lie ahead not just for a Euro-Mediterranean partnership but also for the union itself.

While Western institutions' response to the complex geopolitical and geocultural landscape of the post–Cold War era leaves many commentators skeptical about the future of Mediterranean relationships, these years have witnessed the emergence of a new discourse on the Mediterranean. Born at the confluence of the many social, political, and intellectual contexts that we have sketched, this discourse imagines a future that European institutions have yet to fulfill. If institutional projects continue to fail in developing relationships with the Mediterranean in ways other than those favoring European liberal capitalism and those who live within the Schengen area, the cultural work performed from the 1980s onward seeks to dissipate specters of civilizational clashes by questioning the historical and cultural caesura of the region and unearthing the forgotten legacies of Europe's intertwined identities and communities. This cultural work is also committed to coming to terms with the traumas of nation building by probing and critiquing hegemonic political projects, totalizing cultural representations and discriminatory cartographies. As such, it revisits Western modernization, acknowledging the many positive effects the latter has engendered in matters of health, education, gender equality, social mobility, representative democracy, and more but also its darker side: the exploitation of natural and human resources, which is the legacy of colonialism and imperialism; the institutionalization of racism; the practice of genocide and ethnic cleansing; the spread of militarism and warfare; and the ill effects of capitalist production, accumulation, and consumption on individuals, communities, and the environment. Such revisiting questions the universalizing assumptions of the Western model seen as the final horizon—the teleological endpoint to which so-called premodern or not-yet-modern societies should aspire. In sum, this project reflects on the interdependence of cultures to complicate our understanding of self and other while challenging beliefs and assumptions through a deterritorialized remapping of Mediterranean spaces.

Undoing the Visions of Mediterranean Unity

At the risk of oversimplifying the vast cultural output produced in revisiting the Mediterranean from the 1980s onward,[55] Western scholars are reconverting the Mediterranean into a highly unstable set of relationships in space and time through countermemory projects that restore visibility and unbury what we had or perhaps wanted forgotten. Having rejected the concept of

nation as a weak category, new Mediterranean research disturbs rigid mappings and cartographies. It no longer examines the history of cultures as bounded, autonomous units but charts the complex links and interaction through time between West and East, North and South. What emerges is an interconnected Mediterranean, where material and intellectual culture, trade, and economic exchanges have created systemic interactions between different areas and localities that testify to the porous nature of natural but also cultural, ethnic, religious, and ritual frontiers. Despite attempts to impose univocal visions over Mediterranean pluralism—despite projects to transform the Mediterranean Sea into a Roman, Moslem, Christian or Turkish lake—layers of different civilizations have endured, as have interactions and exchanges between very unlikely groups.

For a long time, classical scholars have reminded us that ancient civilizations drew upon many different cultural traditions to construct their legacy, stressing real or imagined crossovers, kinships, and genealogies with other groups. The connections with the Etruscans and the Greeks have been well documented in Rome's achievements in art and literature, in the success of its political and economic institutions, and even in its consolidation into an empire.[56] Yet, in traditional classical studies, Greco-Roman civilization was also described as "a block fundamentally different from Egypt and the Near East and from both the Bronze and the Middle Age" (Morris 38). New approaches reveal the existence of a more fluid world. For example, Erich Gruen's monumental *Cultural Identity in the Ancient Mediterranean*[57] shows Rome to have been culturally effected by the Hellenic world and by Anatolian and Near Eastern empires, including Egypt. The relationship between Rome and Egypt, long believed to have been a confrontation with the other displayed in plunders of war, is now seen as integral to Rome's self-fashioning. Thus Rome resurfaces as a fundamentally "polyglot and shifting universe" where "military, commercial, social, and cultural contacts blurred boundaries, promoted linguistic fluidity, and jumbled ethnic categories" (Gruen, "Introduction" 1). Like Gruen, Abulafia reminds us that after the fall of Carthage and Corinth in 146 BCE, a large captive population was brought to work in the Roman fields. Here it joined African, Greek, Spanish, and Syrian immigrants whose primary language was Greek (*Great Sea* 193). While the poet Lucan noted that "the city population [was] no longer native Roman, but [. . .] a hodge-podge of races" (ibid.), other cities, like Ostia, which housed an early Jewish community and was the site of resilient cults of Iris, Mithras, and Sarapis, were equally multicultural. Inscriptions in multiple languages throughout classical Rome further indicate the layering of identities and affiliations that justifies claims that the empire was an early example of a global network (Moatti and Kayser 16).

Equally interesting work is being done on the period when bands of Goths, Lombards, Ostrogoths, Vandals, and Visigoths raided the Western Roman Empire.[58] In rebuking the empire's construction of a Greco-Roman identity, the *limes*, Rome's northern and eastern frontier, is revealed as the site of much cultural mixing despite periodic fortifications and deployment of

legions throughout Roman history.[59] This mixing resulted from the Roman practice of according the status of *hospites* to Barbarians who crossed into their territories, often assigning them a portion of a given province's land. Such practice led the Romans to adopt Barbarian customs and fashions and the Barbarians to be permeable to Roman traditions. Mixed marriages (many arranged) played a fundamental role in this Creolization, and the offspring often revealed mixed cultural and political allegiances. Such jumbling of social, cultural, and ethnic categories resulted in racially and culturally hybrid identities. Thus Bartman claims that portraits commissioned by high officials on the Roman frontiers reveal the persistence of border people's ethnic traits, while Isaac's exploration in the writings of intellectuals from the Roman provinces indicates that their Latin was greatly affected by border idioms.[60]

Similarly, Latin religion faced periodic revivals of pre-Hellenic beliefs in Attis, Cybele, Isis, and Mithras as well as the spread of Druidic cults, and in the latter empire, Rome failed to achieve a unified Christian identity, despite Constantine's legalization of Christian worship with the Edict of Milan in 313 CE and Theodosius's promotion of Christianity to religion of state in 380 CE. The ceremony that accompanied Constantine's dedication of the new Rome best illustrates the diversity of beliefs that coexisted within the empire, since during the celebrations Christ's cross was placed above the chariot of the sun god (Abulafia, *Great Sea* 219). Roman attempts at cohesion failed to take hold in other realms. When the empire divided into eastern and western spheres of influence after the death of Theodosius, the separation solidified a process that had long been active. While the official language of the West remained Latin, in the East, Greek, a tongue that never lost its currency, replaced it. Cultural and religious homogeneity were also compromised. Christianity as a whole was very fragmentary, and dissident groups emerged within it as early as the Council of Nicea of 325 CE, a scission that led to the creation of the Coptic Church. Horden and Purcell well summarize the porous nature of Roman unity as it emerges from the work of contemporary scholars of the Mediterranean in the Classical period: "There is indeed a strong sense in which the Roman Empire was not Roman (and, we might add, in which the succeeding Byzantine Empire was not Greek), or at least only patchily, thinly so. Rome's was an Empire in which the precarious unity of Greek and Roman language and culture and an economy of exaction and coinage were totally dependent on communication; and for all the fame of the Roman road, the most basic and the most vital lines of communication lay across the sea" (23). In revisiting the Mediterranean, other hegemonic visions are also being reconsidered. Against Pirenne's thesis, Graham reminds us that "the conceptual model of a Mediterranean world defined by Christian-Islamic conflict" during the Middle Ages is too deterministic (76). This model assumes coherence within both the medieval Christian and Islamic worlds, disregarding internal schisms. Within the Christian world, heresies were frequent, as testified by the rise of the Cathars in the Balkans and the Languedoc (ibid. 77–78) and by the Great Schism of 1054 CE that fractured the Church into Eastern Orthodox and Roman

Catholic denominations and divided western Europe from the Baltic to the Adriatic.[61] Similar tensions occurred within Islam, where the death of Mohammed led to the creation of the caliphates of Medina and Damascus and the schism between Sunnis and Shi'tes (Graham 76, 78). If the Christian and Muslim worlds were far from being monolithic, equally problematic are the visions that pit one against the other. Graham reminds us that the eight hundred years of the *Reconquista* were "a spasmodic process [. . .] The iconic Islamic cities of Cordoba and Seville only fell to Christian forces in 1236 and 1248 respectively, while Granada held on—through negotiations—until 1492" (ibid. 78), the year Boabdil surrendered. This lengthy takeover suggests that medieval Spain was a place "in which the barrier between Islam and Christianity was a permeable one across which Christian, Muslim and Jewish influences intermingled" (ibid. 80). Tracing this centuries-long intermingling has enabled many scholars[62] to chart the boundary crossings between the Muslim Mediterranean and the Christian Mediterranean by members of the Umayyad dynasty as they brought to Iberia Islamic cultural models derived from Egypt, Syria, and Iraq. Despite the Arabs' extension of their political, social, and economic organization westward, they allowed diverse societies and ethnicities to coexist. The Muslims recognized Christians and Jews as fellow "People of the Book" who worshiped in the same monotheistic tradition. Thus non-Muslim subjects became *dhimmi* (individuals who would remit a tax) or *jizyah* in return for their right to worship (Abulafia, *Great Sea* 144). Iberia itself became a multicultural world—the world of *convivencia* in *al-Andalus*—where Christians, Jews, and Muslims engaged in conflictive but also productive relationships. Cordoba, Granada, Sevilla, and Toledo became crossroads of civilizations, attracting scholars and intellectuals from Europe and the Muslim Empire, while art and architecture flourished, giving rise to a distinct Hispano-Moresque style. The Mozarabs (Jews or Arabized Christians who were native of Muslim Iberia) translated older Greek texts, thus ensuring the preservation and transmission to western Europe of lost ancient knowledge. Among them stands out Ibn Rush (1126–1198), better known to westerners as Averroes, who translated Aristotle and whose rational philosophy was studied and debated in Bologna, Padua, and Paris. Equally important was Musa ibn Maymum (1135–1204), or Maimonides, a Jew from Cordoba, who published 38 volumes of Averroes's works. In retracing the contacts between East and West during the era of Islamic Spain, scholars are also bringing to light more mundane aspects of the Arab cultural legacy: "the lemons we squeeze, the sugar we eat and the marzipan we savor" (Abulafia, "Introduction" 24)[63]—and, we might add, the game of chess we play.

A different and chronologically more limited example of the Mediterranean legacy of exchange emerged in Mazara, on the western coast of Sicily, where after the arrival in 827 CE of a small fleet of Arabs led by Asad ibn al-Furàt, a rich culture flourished. This culture, despite its comparatively short-lived existence, is recorded in the two *diwan* (collections of poetry) of Ibn Hamdis (1055–1133) and Al Ballanubi (c. eleventh to twelfth century) as well as in the *Kitab Rugiar* (*Book of Roger*) by Al-Idrisi (1101–1161). When

the Normans conquered Sicily (1061–1091), this culture did not disappear. The Franco-Norman kings Roger, William I, and William II made extensive use of Islamic cultural forms in their monarchic self-representation. While using these forms was part of a political strategy to impose hegemony over a pluralistic kingdom that comprised Greeks, Jews, and a large Arabic-speaking population, it remains significant that diversity was adapted to political ends rather than being erased. Examples of this interaction are the Islamic motifs and ornamentation found in Norman architecture as well as some of the buildings themselves. As Michele Amari has demonstrated, the presence of the Arabicizing style in Norman buildings is a powerful reminder of the permeability of culture in an epoch when Arabic, Greek, and Latin cultures shared historical and geographic spaces. After 1196, the Swabian emperor Frederick II, son of Henry VI and the Norman queen Constance, occupied the throne until 1250 and reconstituted the Kingdom of Sicily as a Latin Christian state. However, even as the Sicilian kingdom realigned itself with a Christian cultural and political agenda, syncretism did not disappear. Frederick was "no baptized sultan" (Abulafia, *Western Mediterranean* 23), but he adopted many strategies used by the Norman monarchs to rule his diverse kingdom. He established contacts with Jewish and Muslim scholars and was a committed patron of the arts and culture. Karla Mallette has argued, in *The Kingdom of Sicily*, that Frederick's cultural legacy is perhaps best reflected in the Sicilian poetry of da Lentini, delle Vigne, Mostacci, and Pugliese. While it does not have direct ties with the Arab world, this poetry brims with principles of natural philosophy translated from Arabic texts, having evolved its monolingual vernacular from the plurilingual models of its predecessors.

With the *Reconquista*, Muslim Iberia's *convivencia* was severely compromised, while Sicilian Muslims were deported to the colony of Lucera, but cultural exchanges across ideologically divided worlds did not end, as many Jews and Moors expelled from former Muslim lands moved to the Ottoman Empire. "Outside a small group of specialists," this empire had failed in the past to attract the attention of Western historians (including Braudel),[64] who, in examining the fifteenth century, were "already anticipating the shift in locus of European history far to the north and west and away from the Mediterranean" (Greene 219–220). Recent studies of the Mediterranean, however, have devoted much attention to the Ottoman Empire, as scholars increasingly recognize how its expansion into areas of linguistic, cultural, religious, and ethnic differentiation led to a fragmented form of government unlike any found in traditional empires: "Given the social rather than territorial basis of the administration and its tendencies towards decentralization, and the existence of the 'mosaic' of different ethnic and cultural groups [. . .] it may be more appropriate to view [the empire] as a dynamic and loosely connected network of regional systems, rather than as a closely integrated imperial hierarchy" (Proudfoot 99).

The empire was certainly based on a Turkish-Islamic polity, but its expansion into areas inhabited by non-Muslim minorities, such as Armenians, Christianized Arabs, Greek Orthodox, and Jews, led to an administrative

organization founded on ethnoreligious communities. Called *millets*, these communities paid taxes to the state but maintained freedom of religion, self-government, tribunals, and their own schools. The most important *millets* were the Orthodox Christian, the Armenian (which included all non-Orthodox Christians), and the Jewish. While the backing of the Orthodox Church might have been motivated by "reasons of *Realpolitik*" (Green, "Resurgent Islam" 233),[65] such structure facilitated ethnic, linguistic, and religious pluralism, ultimately rendering the empire more hospitable to many minorities.

An example of the legacy of pluralism in the Ottoman lands is the famous Edirne Letter. Written in the middle of the fifteenth century by Isaac Sarfati, a Rabbi of the Edirne, the letter laments the forced conversions and expulsion of Jews from western Europe. The letter also presents an image of Muslim Turkey as a place where Jews could live a better life than under Christian rule:

> I have heard of the afflictions, more bitter than death, that have befallen our brethren in Germany, of the tyrannical laws, the compulsory baptisms and the banishments, which are of daily occurrence [. . .] The clergy and the monks, false priests that they are, rise up against the unhappy people of God [. . .] For this reason they have made a law that every Jew found upon a Christian ship bound for the East shall be flung into the sea. Alas! How evil are the people of God in Germany entreated [. . .] I, Isaac Sarfati [. . .] proclaim to you that Turkey is a land wherein nothing is lacking, and where, if you will, all shall yet be well with you. The way to the Holy Land lies open to you through Turkey. Is it not better for you to live under Muslims than under Christians? [. . .] O Israel, wherefore sleepest thou? Arise! And leave this accursed land forever! (Lewis, *Jews* 135–136)

Equally fascinating is a second letter, written in the sixteenth century by a Frenchman living at the Ottoman court. The letter states that the Jews "have among them workmen of all artes and handicrafts most excellent, and especially of the Maranes of late banished and driven out of Spain and Portugale, who to the great detriment and damage of the Christinitie, have taught the Turks divers[e] inventions, craftes, and engines of warre [. . .] They have also set up printing, not before seen in those countries, by the which in faire characters they put in light divers[e] bookers in divers[e] languages in Greek, Latin, Italian, Spanish and the Hebrew tongue, being to them naturell" (Mazover 48). These and other documents that are being recovered by contemporary scholars[66] indicate a degree of tolerance for ethnic and cultural diversity, based "on the principle of conditional toleration established in the early Islamic empires" through taxation and, in the case of Christian communities, "the levy of young men for the Ottoman army, the famous janissary corps" (Abulafia, *Mediterranean* 249).

The Ottomans' structure of ethnoreligious communities also rendered the empire more permeable to European ideas than was the case in the late eighteenth century, when the rising forces of French and British Westernization

encroached on it. The occupation of Egypt by Napoleon opened the Ottoman Empire to Western ideas about society, politics, and economics that would engender reforms in the midnineteenth century, including the creation of a rail system and the abolition of slavery. To be sure, such exposure was part of an explicit design to destabilize the empire by implanting ideas among Ottomans subjects, as the French did with the propaganda of French revolutionary ideas among the Greeks (Proudfoot 101). Nevertheless, the Ottomans' bureaucracy embarked in a wide range of reforms that would coalesce around the *Tanzimat* ("Reforms") of 1838, a program initiated by the sultan Abdul Megid to centralize administration and introduce European technological and scientific innovation that modernized society and encompassed the promotion of Western literature and equality among genders.

Muslim Iberia, Norman Sicily, and the Ottoman Empire represent the best-known cases of cultural exchange and coexistence occurring between the fifteenth and the nineteenth centuries. Other examples of interaction between Mediterranean groups are resurfacing in contemporary works. For example, examinations of medieval and early renaissance economic history are leading to the reassessment of merchants' trade and commerce as a "solvent" (Abulafia, "Mediterraneans" 74) that enabled contacts between unlikely groups. Such contacts began in the early Middle Ages, at the time of the Arabs' westward advance, when sovereign power became fragmented into lordships, domains, and city-states. In Italy, where this process was especially complete, by the early ninth century the city-state of Amalfi emerged as a trading power, with extensive commercial networks based not only in Byzantium but also in Muslim Sicily, Egypt, and the Maghreb to supply the popes with spices and silk. Equally mobile were the Jewish merchants, who, by the tenth century, passed freely between Islamic and Christian worlds.[67] While Jewish merchants did not possess sophisticated nautical skills, they were experienced in commercial land trade and established close relationships through caravan routes in the sub-Saharan desert, effectively linking black Africa to the Maghreb. By and large, the presence of non-Muslim traders was more conspicuous, since Islamic law forbade Muslims from trading in the lands of the infidels.

As Muslim settlements in the Mediterranean expanded, the presence of Christian and Jewish merchants became a necessity. Between the eleventh and the fourteenth centuries, other Italian city-states—Florence, Genoa, Lucca, Pisa, and Venice—also emerged as major players in trade routes and exchange networks, linking northwest Europe and the East.[68] As these Italian cities competed to gain control of the trading routes to Asia and China for goods such as silk, spices, stones, sugar, and more, Venice gained primacy over Genoa, but in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, Barcelona, Montpellier, and Majorca also emerged as players in the commerce of wheat, salt, leather, coral, oil, wool, wood, and base meal. Even the containment of the Ottoman Empire with the Battle of Lepanto in 1571 did not close trade routes, and the cities continued in their Mediterranean travels throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, testifying to the enduring dynamism

of trans-Mediterranean trade.[69] The growth of Leghorn and Smyrna in the seventeenth century best testifies to exchanges between the eastern and western Mediterranean after Lepanto. Leghorn grew as a trading port by granting privileges known as the *Livornine*, which provided free trade and tax exemption to attract merchants—especially Jews from the Levant and North Africa but also Armenians, Moors, Persians, and Ponentine Jews, who served as "ideal intermediaries between Tuscany and the Ottoman Empire" (Greene, "Resurgent Islam" 240). In time, Jewish merchants acquired land and established a synagogue, while Muslims were allowed to build mosques and a cemetery (Abulafia, *Great Sea* 465). Like Leghorn, in the seventeenth century the Ottoman city of Smyrna became a center of cross-cultural commerce, with large communities of Dutch, English, French, and Italian merchants (Abulafia, *Mediterranean* 242). This intra-Mediterranean commerce even gave rise to a *lingua franca*, a language derived from Arabic, French, Greek, Italian, Spanish, and Turkish words recorded by several scholars.[70]

Contemporary historians are also recovering materials that document the interdependent history of Mediterranean piracy and corsair wars. An ancient Mediterranean tradition, by the sixteenth century piracy became an activity practiced by Christians and Muslims alike. Whereas pirates acted independently, corsair activity became institutionalized with the support of governments to which corsairs remitted a percentage of their revenues. Corsair wars intensified with the Ottoman advance into Byzantine lands, encouraging runs across the waters of the Mediterranean, with frequent incursions in Italy and Spain.[71] One such corsair, Aruj, occupied Algiers; after his death, his brother Khair ed-Din negotiated its protection by the Ottoman Empire, establishing the Regency of Algiers and, later on, Tripoli and Tunisia. The Maghreb thus became a powerful front of corsair activity, the so-called Barbary State that, despite numerous attempts to control it, lasted until the French occupation of Algiers in 1830. The Maghreb provided a base for frequent raids on the Iberian Peninsula and especially the Italian Peninsula. France was raided less frequently, but Muslim incursions occurred as far north as Cornwall, Iceland, and Ireland (Bono, *Un altro mediterraneo* 89). Black Africans, as their presence in Sicily in the sixteenth century testifies,[72] also became part of this trafficking, either because they were taken to the Mediterranean from sub-Saharan Africa or the Atlantic coast or because, having settled in the Maghreb as slaves or freemen, they were captured there. Slaves were acquired not only through raids or in sea and land battles (as at Lepanto, where thousands of Muslims were captured and enslaved) but also often as the result of changed political conditions, as was the case of the *moriscos* sent from Spain to Italy in 1569–1570 (ibid. 90). Muslims tended to enslave great numbers of people, but, by and large, they traded slaves for ransoms (ibid. 98–99). This practice generated considerable revenues and encouraged commercial networks between the Christian and Muslim worlds. Organizations were even created to serve this specific purpose, such as the Order of the Trinity (1198) or the Order of Our Lady of Mercy (1235), with many added in the following centuries.[73]

The Christian world had its own corsairs. With the support of Imperial Spain, the Popes, Genoa, Pisa, Venice, and the Knights of Malta, Christians frequently raided Muslim and Ottoman lands to acquire slaves to sell in the markets of Cagliari, Livorno, and Pisa. Christians favored holding slaves to work in their ships (the *galere*), in private homes as domestic servants, or in the fields as laborers. Where vast concentrations of slaves existed, they were even allowed some freedom to profess their religion (ibid. 94). Human trade, however, occurred not only between Muslims and Christians but also within Christendom itself, as Greek merchants were enslaved and traded by the Catholic pirates of Malta (Greene, *Catholic Pirates*). The phenomenon generated various modes of exchange among not only Latin and Orthodox Christians, Muslims, Jews, and African animists but also "individuals [. . .] from the Slav, Magyar [. . .] German, Scandinavian, and Anglo-Saxon worlds" (Bono, *Un altro mediterraneo* 111).

Related to piracy and the corsair wars is the history of conversions from Christianity to Islam, well documented by Bennassar's *Les Chrétiens de Allah*, which examines the cases of 1,500 Europeans, primarily from the Mediterranean area, who turned Muslim.[74] Additionally, there were conversions of British, Dutch, Flemish, Polish, and Russians whose navigational knowledge of their own waters turned them into successful Muslim pirates (ibid. 102). A number of these converts became upwardly mobile, even acquiring the status of pashas.[75] Conversions from Islam to Christianity have been harder to document, since unlike the European converts who retained both Christian and Muslim names, Muslim converts did not.[76] For obvious reasons, the historical recovery of crypto-Christian or crypto-Muslim conversions remains challenging.

Worthy of recollection are the many studies of travels and pilgrimages that took place across boundaries and despite political divides; the history of shared Mediterranean labor—such as tuna fishing and the packaging of anchovies—that bought together men from divided shores; and the migrations and resettlements in both the East and the West due to religious, economic, or cataclysmic factors. Thus, during the Crusades, permanent settlements developed in the Levant next to seasonal ones tied to the migration of merchants eastward.[77] As the Ottoman Empire advanced westward, many Greek scholars fled, often carrying manuscripts that enabled the revival of Greek in Italy and the development of the Classical culture of humanism (Balard 212). Other groups experienced the reversals of uprooting, such as the Albanians and the Slavs who resettled in southern Italy to escape the Ottomans' conquest of the western Balkans. The work of present-day scholars of the Mediterranean extends to the late nineteenth century and beyond, to the history of colonialism (a history of violent clashes but still marked by proximity, connections, and hybridity), and to the postcolonial period of independence that saw the return of many European colons from Algeria, Libya, Morocco, Somalia, and Tunisia, among others. These same independence movements are also responsible nowadays for the flow of economically

disadvantaged people across the Mediterranean waterways from the Balkans, the Middle East, and Saharan and sub-Saharan Africa.

Just as significant is the contemporary work of a growing Mediterranean artistic *koinè*[78] that questions the solidification of the Mediterranean into a frontier of "fortress Europe" by conjuring the region's hidden history of pluralism and revealing the contaminations and crossovers in our globalized present. In intertwined stories of people and cultures, contemporary novelists, poets, dramatists, and filmmakers are narrating the complex interactions between North, South, East, and West to raise doubts about Europe's Western-centric identity. They also remind us that the Mediterranean has always been the place of vigorous exchanges—a space where frontiers are mobile confines, always traversed and therefore questioned and interrogated.

The Mediterranean as "Idea" and "Ideal"

This narration of cross-border practices also includes the philosophical project of the Mediterranean as an "ideal" of integration and reconciliation—that is, of Mediterranean difference as a countervailing idea to that of the region as a convergence, rather than a clash, of civilizations. This project implies a will to resist the Occidentalization of the world and triumphant liberal capitalism as the manifest destiny for both eastern and southern Mediterranean shores.[79] As a philosophical "ideal," this vision of Mediterranean discursiveness harks back to the utopia of the Saint-Simonians and the writers of the Algiers School. In its most recent articulations, it has elicited a lukewarm reception by both Western[80] and Arabic-Islamic commentators for whom the Mediterranean conjures the traumas associated with these interactions, including the cultural and physical violence of colonization, deculturation, and asymmetrical power relations. Edgar Morin and Amin Maalouf summarize this intellectual landscape when they describe current European thinking on the Mediterranean as one that demythologizes totalizing assumptions about the Mediterranean but remythologizes them (Morin, "Penser la Méditerrannée" and "Demythifier et Remythifier"; Maalouf) by creating a new mythology of a shared history and shared belonging.

Nevertheless, in the social performativity of the Mediterranean as "ideal difference," this Western discourse might be transformed in social and political reality if we are allowed to recover this historical and cultural interdependence and thus create what Giorgio Agamben has described as new forms of sociality in "coming communities" (in the book by the same title, *The Coming Community*). Born in a zone of indistinction between self and other, and constituted outside the bonds of the nation-state and beyond the ontology of Eurocentrism, these "coming communities" carry the possibility of a "coming politics": a more just and democratic polity capable of crossing external and internal frontiers.

To conclude, this extensive revisiting of the Mediterranean from the late 1980s to the present has produced not only a large body of innovative scholarly work but also a reimagining of the rigid cartographies of European modernity.

As a result, Mediterranean histories and cultures might finally reacquire the instability of relations that have always characterized them in space and time. To reprise Braudel's *La Méditerranée. L'espace et l'historie*, what resurfaces is the Mediterranean of "the Greek cities in Sicily, the Arab presence in Spain, [and] the Turkish Islam in Yugoslavia" but also "the boat of the fisherman, that is still the boat of Ulysses" that lies next to "the fishing boat that devastates the bottom of the sea or the enormous oil tankers" (6–7). In the unburying of these overlapping territories, histories, spaces, and times also lies the idea of Mediterranean difference as both a real and imaginary concept—as both referent and metaphor—to respond to a Western world increasingly straddled across an Atlantic/Mediterranean divide. While this vision remains a cultural hypothesis, it carries the need to fulfill an incomplete yet necessary project. In the words of Lévinas, "our era [. . .] is action for the world to come, surpassing one's era [. . .] Léon Bloom wrote [. . .] 'We work *in* the present, *not for* the present [. . .] May the future and the most distant things be the rule of all the present days'" (28).

CHAPTER 2

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INTERLUDE

FROM DISCOURSES *ON* TO DISCOURSES *FROM* THE ITALIAN MEDITERRANEAN

In the introduction and Chapter 1, we outlined how the Mediterranean has been the object of a tradition of discursiveness traceable all the way to antiquity. In the early modern era, Mediterranean discursiveness took a distinct shape with regard to Italy, especially its southern regions. As a result, a highly stereotyped discourse emerged, paving the way for the *questione meridionale*, or southern question, wherein the South embodies underdevelopment and decay as articulated in social, cultural, and racial terms, often by Italians themselves. This discourse resiliently continued through the post–World War II period, finally to be questioned by the *neomeridionalismo* of the 1980s, a fundamental point of reference and essential prelude from which to assess contemporary rethinking of the Mediterranean in Italian thought and cultural practices.

MEDITERRANEAN DISCURSIVENESS IN THE EARLY MODERN ERA

The shift in European and world trade of the sixteenth century seriously compromised the trans-Mediterranean commerce that had led to the flourishing of Italian cities such as Amalfi, Genoa, Pisa, and Venice. While Italians were proud of the westward discoveries of England and Spain, which explorers such as Cabot, Columbus, Verrazzano, and Vespucci had commandeered, they were also concerned about the future. Francesco Guicciardini, in his *Storia d'Italia* (written between 1537 and 1540 and covering the years 1492 to 1534), honors the voyages but worries about "the immoderate lust for gold and riches" unleashed by the discoveries and the "great detriment and damage" that the shift in economic and political power could have on

Italian cities like Venice, whose spice trade with Asia was compromised by the Portuguese military settlements in the Moluccas and India (cited in Marino 51–52). While other factors contributed to the "great detriment and damage" predicted by Guicciardini,[1] the impact of the discoveries was certainly not immediate.

Other events taking place in Europe had more lasting consequences. In 1519, Charles V became the sole heir of the major European dynasties of Austria, Burgundy, and Spain, assuming control of an empire that spanned from the Americas to central, eastern, and western Europe and included Naples, Sardinia, and Sicily. Following the treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis in 1559, Charles emerged as "arbiter of the entire peninsula" (Duggan 63). While the popes retained control of the Papal States, the rest of Italy came under Spanish imperial control, where it would remain until the eighteenth century. Initially, the so-called *pax hispanica* brought stability, and the Italian economy remained solid despite the opening of Atlantic routes. Growth in population led to a growth in industrial and agricultural production that had been stalled since the fourteenth-century plagues. Forests were cleared and new lands ploughed to cultivate grains and vines. Textile and banking industries also flourished. Prosperity led to road improvements, and Rome, the destination of pilgrims since the fourteenth century, when Pope Boniface VIII established the tradition of the Jubilee (February 22, 1300), underwent vast urban renewal. As Christopher Duggan notes, "Rome was transformed in the sixteenth century from a poor, rather decayed town, into a vibrant city, with great piazzas and churches, built and decorated by the best architects and painters of the day. It became the shop-window of the Counter Reformation" (65).

Not only were piazzas and churches built in Rome. In the Kingdom of Naples, the Aragonese rulers, more than their Angevine predecessors, patronized the arts. Alfonso V (1442–1458) and Ferrante (1458–1494) began architectural projects that were continued by Pedro de Toledo (1532–1553), who built new walls and streets and renovated old structures, turning the city into a magnet for the provincial nobility. These outward appearances of wealth and prosperity were deceiving. As in Florence and Venice, members of the Neapolitan merchant classes had progressively abandoned commerce and trade to transfer money in land and adopt the lifestyle of the landed aristocracy. The Aragonese, in particular, were very adept at selling titles, and as a result, the number of noble families augmented exponentially. The abandonment of commerce and trade for the ownership of land caused other problems. Having moved to the cities, landlords managed their holdings through overseers, instituting leases and contracts that were very unfavorable to the peasantry; they also did little to encourage the agricultural output of fruit and hemp and the manufacture of silk, rope, sails, and wool that had been crucial to the medieval economy. These changes, coupled with the inability of Italian cities and states to create effective networks of trade, reduced the Italian merchants' bargaining power with emerging European economies that were younger and freer of embedded rules and restrictions

governing mercantile interactions. Within a short span of time, the signs of a collapse became evident: "Imports outweighed exports, and resultant trade deficits weakened states already in a downward economic spiral [. . .] Large producers squeezed out small ones and a more hierarchically divided society emerged. Such decentralization and inequalities made the Italian markets all the more attractive and vulnerable to Dutch, English, and French commercial expansion" (Marino, "Economic Structures" 65).

The devastation was widespread throughout Italy, but the South suffered the most. The Aragonese continued the Angevins' trend of giving power to the nobility, and the Viceroyalty, established in 1503, became entrenched at the turn of the century. The period of Pedro de Toledo's reign (1532–1553), though important for the urban renewal of Naples, witnessed the establishment of heavy taxation on the local population. Paying little attention to developing a sound economy, Toledo taxed not only bread and wine sales but also important trade items such as silk. In the countryside, poverty grew, leading to massive migrations of the poor toward Naples, Messina, and Palermo. A demographic surge rendered matters even more complex. By the 1550s, the population of the Kingdom of Naples and the islands was on the rise, increasing by 45 percent through the 1800s, whereas northern and central Italy would gain less than 30 percent during the same period of time (Duggan 71). Early in the seventeenth century, Naples was one of the largest European capitals, with more than 200,000 people.

The poor from the countryside added themselves to destitute urban populations. Poverty and unemployment rose and led to revolts in 1585 and 1647–1648 (the latter called the revolt of Masaniello, after a young fisherman who is said to have led the revolting masses in the takeover of the Viceroy's residence) but also brought famine and plagues, including the ruinous plague of 1656. Hunger was a major issue in Messina and in Palermo as well. To ensure that the population was fed, a special office was instituted: the *Grassiero*. Migration and poverty were not the only issues troubling the southern kingdom. In the countryside, banditry, or *brigantaggio*, became very common. The region of Calabria, with its impervious topography, provided a haven for thieves and criminals, as did the Abruzzi and the countryside of Campania and Sicily. Criminality and lawlessness threatened urban centers, and watchtowers were built around cities to protect them against raids. As a result, the social fabric of the kingdom lay in tatters. Huge economic disparities distanced the nobles from the commoners, the *popolo*, and especially the nobles from the plebeians, known as *lazzari*, or *lazzaroni*, a mass so destitute that authorities feared it might explode in violence, anarchy, and disorder. The lavish lifestyle of the nobility did little to quell resentment and unrest and likely contributed to kindle the masses' anarchic potential. Court ceremonials, where ostentatious pomp and elaborate symbolic displays were the norm, took place frequently both to introduce the court's hierarchy to its subjects and to affirm the court's standing during times of disorder.[2]

The outcome of these social and economic upheavals was that, by the end of the sixteenth century, the kingdom had entered a period of crisis, which

was compounded by the frequency of earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and other natural disasters that periodically increased the region's havoc, like the calamitous earthquake of 1693. Thus, while in the 1470s Francesco Bandini could write that Naples, then under the reign of Ferrante, was a city "where one does not feel the infighting of citizens [. . .] their pushbacks, seditions and the shrieks of oppressed people" (cited in Mozzillo, *Passaggio a Mez-zogiorno* 85),[3] in the following centuries representations changed. The many travel guides about Naples that were available between the mid-sixteenth and late seventeenth centuries share a common theme: "The city and its surroundings were viewed as an earthly paradise, while many Neapolitans, especially the poor, were seen in a different light" (Selwyn 22–23). For example, the Tuscan agent Fabrizio Barnaba wrote, in 1607, "The famine is so great throughout the Kingdom that the communities come together in Naples, and they go throughout the city, crying: 'Bread, Bread.' And there is such a concentration of the poor that God forbid there is an infestation of plague; because the people are dying on the streets and no one is taking any chances" (ibid. 33–34). A less sympathetic account is provided by Giulio Cesare Capaccio in his *Descrizione di Napoli*, also written around 1607: "Nowhere in the world is there anything so obtrusive and undisciplined [. . .] miserable, beggarly [. . .] such as to undermine the wisest constitution of the best republics, the dregs of humanity, who have been at the bottom of all the tumult and uprisings in this city and cannot be restrained otherwise than by gallows" (ibid. 41). The chronicles of these Italian writers highlight the state of misery and lawlessness that permeated the city but also evince a sense of spiritual decay that affected the entire Kingdom. This belief in a degradation affecting spiritual life would give rise to stereotyped discourses about Italy, especially its southern regions, that would evolve in two directions: one outward toward the New World, as explorations and missionary travels (especially by Jesuits) would reveal how foreigners came to see the peninsula; and the other inward, as northern travelers visiting Italy would define it through essentialist descriptions as a self-contained, backward, and dangerous world.

Traveling in "Las Indias de por acà": The Jesuits in Italy

The role that Spain had in constructing a discourse on the Mediterranean, and Italy in particular, has long been ignored. Most studies about the influence that European travelers had in constructing a biased view about Italy are tied to the Grand Tour, whose origins hark back to the reign of Elisabeth I (1558–1603) but truly became established from the eighteenth century onward.[4] These accounts downplay or disregard the important role that religious orders, and especially the Society of Jesus founded by the Spaniard Saint Ignatius of Loyola, had in creating essentialist depictions of Italy. Cesare de Seta speaks for many when, in *L'Italia del Grand Tour*, he writes that Spain, the largest European empire of the sixteenth century, did not produce a culture of the tour since "*hispanidad* did not foresee a need to

explore the Old World" (9). Since Spain controlled much of the peninsula and had experienced close ties with Italy since Roman times, Spaniards had little interest in traveling to see the remains of ancient civilizations that they could find on their own soil: "The Iberian peninsula had known the civilizations of the Phoenicians, the Greeks, the Carthaginians, the Romans, the Arabs, and the Christians. Contempt and haughtiness prevented Spaniards from experiencing the *Grand Tour*" (ibid.). While de Seta correctly denies a tradition of the Grand Tour existing in Spain, Spain played a substantial role in many accounts about southern Italy authored by Jesuit missionaries.

Shortly after its institutionalization in 1540, the Society of Jesus established its gravitational center in Italy.[5] After the Council of Trent (1545–1563) and the post-Tridentine apostolic program that followed, ecclesiastical authorities wrote a number of reports suggesting the need for broad reforms in the Kingdom of Sicily.[6] In 1552, the Jesuits arrived in Naples, where they would remain until their expulsion in 1767. Their mission was to create a college, address criminality and prostitution in the city, and civilize the urban poor, among whom there were numerous Muslims (Selwyn 89–90). However, since the rural poor's answer to natural disasters, deaths, and plagues had been to rely on cults and cult figures that were seen as superstitions by the post-Tridentine Church, religious authorities encouraged the Jesuits to travel outside the main urban centers and to proselytize remote areas of the kingdom. Thus the Jesuits journeyed to many other areas of southern Italy, such as Abruzzi, Basilicata, Calabria, and Molise, but also the islands of Corsica, Sardinia, and Sicily. These were uncharted territories that would become destinations of European travelers only centuries later, since for many noninhabitants of the peninsula, to venture past Salerno meant "to penetrate the dark soul of the Kingdom" (Mozzillo, *Viaggiatori* 10).

Throughout the Kingdom of Naples, the Jesuits found parallels with their missionary work in Asia and the Americas.[7] This led them to transfer unto the Italian South the alterity they encountered in the newly discovered worlds. According to Prosperi's *Tribunali della coscienza*, Silvestro Landini might be at the origin of these representations. Landini, who was from Sarzana on the Ligurian Sea, crossed to the island of Capraia and from there arrived in Corsica. In a letter to Ignatius of Loyola on February 7, 1553, Landini said that, upon his arrival, he discovered that the people were affected by "a thousand superstitions, infinite enmities, ingrained hate, killings everywhere, universal Lucifer-like pomposity, [and] unending lust" (cited in Prosperi 552). A few years later, he projected New World characteristics onto Corsica. In another letter to Loyola, in August 1561, he commented, "I have never known a land more needy of the teachings of God than this one [. . .] This island will be my Indies, as deserving as the ones of Presbyter John, because here there is great ignorance of God" (ibid. 15, 18n). Reflecting on Landini's parallelism between Corsica and the Indies, and between the neighboring and the distant savage, Prosperi comments that differences between people had been very great in Europe. However, until then, age and social standing had defined hierarchies, with peasants occupying the lowest rungs, often being

compared to children or even animals. With the discovery of the New World, explorers and missionaries came into contact with the Amerindian indigenous population and developed an understanding of diversity based on Christian theological principles. Since Amerindians did not share these principles, they were labeled as savages and barbarians. As Mignolo has argued (*The Idea* 20), Bartolomé de las Casas's *Apologética Historia Sumaria* (c. 1552) greatly contributed to this new classificatory system, since he assigned Amerindians (as well as Turks and Moors) to a barbarian group, calling *barbarie contraria* those who resisted or refused the teachings of the Gospels. In this new representation of diversity, the peasant populations of the Old World also found a place, since their beliefs relied on superstitions and cults rather than a stringent application of Christian orthodoxy. In Prosperi's words, "the first, timid analogies between European peasants and the savages of the Indies emerged precisely in Spanish settings more tied to the question of conquest" (555). Landini's writings, among the earliest to equate the internal savagery of Corsican populations with the external savagery of the New World's people, would become useful for others to describe areas of the Kingdom of Naples. Thus, for some Jesuits, Sardinia became "this new Sardinian Indies"; for others, the "true Indies" was Sicily; for others yet it was Abruzzi (ibid. 558). By 1556, Filippo Neri was comparing even Rome with the Indies (ibid. 559). In an example of analogical transmission, the term was also applied, as Las Casas would have it, to recent converts to Christianity, the *moriscos*. Cristoforo Rodriguez, in a 1556 letter to Loyola, suggested that the Jesuits should convert *moriscos*, since through them one could civilize yet more Indies. That same year, Diego Laínez proposed an analogous idea (ibid. 558). By 1558, the Spanish Jesuit José de Acosta had published his influential manual, *De Procuranda Indorum Salute*. The manual provided a model for a global evangelizing mission, explaining that societies had reached different stages of civilization, with some so far behind that the Jesuits' role was to Christianize and evangelize them, extirpating superstition, idolatry, and immoral behavior. The guide was adapted for Jesuits located in Italy. There, in the changed version authored by Padre Antonio Cusola, it addressed barbarity and higher and lower rungs in the hierarchy of civilizations (Selwyn 129, 145).

Gradually, southern Italy became construed as the training ground for missionary work in the Indies—even in the *Indipetae*, the collected letters of young novices requesting assignments outside of Europe. In Italian *Indipetae* dated between 1589 and 1649, the novices frequently tied their stays in Italy's southern regions to the Indies, describing Naples, Calabria, and Sicily as places where they could prove their worth. Ecclesiastical authorities shared this idea. For example, Miguel Navarro, in a letter in 1575 to Everard Mercurian, the Society of Jesus's fourth superior general, writes, "Just as the Society has houses of probations for the novitiates, these mountains of Sicily [and Calabria] could be a place where those who desire to go to the Indies can prove their worth [. . .] Whomever will prove himself well in these, our Indies, will be successful in those more remote ones, and, on the contrary, those who have trouble here will not be of much use elsewhere" (cited in

Selwyn 96–97). Obviously, there was much self-promotion in the writings of the Jesuits. Individual missionaries championed their work in the indigenous European Indies, the so-called *las Indias de por acà*, to promote their reassignment to *las Indias de por allà*, or the New World. And the order itself was forging a collective institutional identity based on its achievements while magnifying the barbarity of the people it served. In part, this was done to justify a presence that, by the end of the seventeenth century, had become precarious and subject to institutional criticism fueled by strong anticurial sentiments.

In particular, a group of southern intellectuals—among them Gaetano Filangieri, Giuseppe Maria Galanti, Antonio Gargano, Antonio Genovesi, and Pietro Giannone—believed that reason, not religion, could solve the issues endemic to the region. In 1723, Pietro Giannone published *Istoria civile del Regno di Napoli*, in which he pointed to the Church's role in causing the ills of the State and advanced the idea that a secular monarchy was better suited to govern the kingdom. Giannone had to escape the Kingdom of Naples and, many years later, was captured in the Kingdom of Savoy and forced to abjure his works (he died in prison in 1748). Regardless, sentiments like his remained prevalent, especially among intellectuals at the University of Naples for whom other paths existed besides those advanced by the Jesuits' "civilizing mission." One of these, Antonio Genovesi, believed, as he wrote in *Elementi del commercio* (1765), that education and commerce, not religion, could improve the welfare of the poor.

Two years after the publication of Genovesi's treaty, the Jesuits' hold on power came to an end. Increasingly perceived as meddling in secular matters, they were expelled from the kingdom by King Ferdinand and, on November 3, 1767, escorted to the borders of the Papal States, their accumulated wealth and possessions confiscated. During their stay in the kingdom, the Jesuits had managed to perpetrate the image of a south full of Muslims to convert, prostitutes to save, barbarous peasants to civilize, and a clergy to be steered to the proper moral path. Through publications and their network of *scholae*, they had greatly influenced the discourse on the South that was taking shape in Europe, as their categorization of "Internal Indies" became known as far away as Germany (Prosperi 583). The expression would resurface in the writing of Dominique Vivant-Denon, who, traveling to southern Italy at the end of the eighteenth century, would comment in *Voyage en Sicile* (1788) that he saw "Peru and the Indies throughout the Kingdom of Naples" (Mozzillo, *Viaggiatori* 77).

DISCOURSES FROM THE NORTH: GRAND TOURS, VOYAGES, *REISEN,* AND *BRIEFE*

While the discovery of the Americas initiated a forced, long-distance comparison with the "savagery" of the Kingdom of Naples, another typecasting of Italy and the South emerged in northern Europe. Beginning with the reign of Elizabeth I (1558–1603),[8] the British Crown financed a journey

to the continent for members of the nobility and the bourgeoisie that has been considered the precursor of the Grand Tour (de Seta, *L'Italia* 9). The Grand Tour, per se, would blossom as a cultural practice after 1713, the year of the treaty of Utrecht. But by the end of the sixteenth century, upper-class Europeans traveled extensively in Italy, often residing at length in *scholae* run by the Jesuits and other orders: "Every small or large city has colleges for the education of the nobility: a thick web of *scholae* cover the peninsula, primarily entrusted to the Jesuits, but also to [. . .] other religious orders with learned traditions" (ibid. 18). By the eighteenth century, the Grand Tour was a necessary step for scions of the elite wishing to complete their education. Among the early Grand Tour's travelers was Joseph Addison, who journeyed through Italy between 1701 and 1703 with 300 pounds given to him by the Crown and left an account of his journey, published in 1705 as *Remarks on Several Parts of Italy*.

Addison's journey through Italy involved a quest for the cultural memories of the classical and humanistic tradition: "Before I cuter'd on my Voyage I took care to refresh my Memory among the Classic Authors, and to make such Collections out of 'em as I might afterwards have Occasion for. I must confess it was not one of the least Entertainments that I met with in travelling, to examine these several Descriptions, as it were, upon the Spot, and to compare the Natural Face of the Country with the Landships that the Poets have given us of it" (cited in Fliri 72). Since the "natural face of the country" could not compete with the images of the "poets," Addison's writings frequently unfold into descriptions of a peninsula inhabited by slothful and indolent people living under the yoke of tyrannical leaders and corrupt clergymen. The impact of Addison's *Remarks* was considerable. His work was widely read, as reprints in 1718, 1726, and 1733 suggest, and "fixed in his memory and that of his contemporaries the image of a stagnant land [. . .] closed in itself and without any religious or political heft on the rest of Europe" (Venturi 1,013). Writers who followed in Addison's path felt justified in claiming the cultural superiority of northern European regions over their southern counterparts. Such perceptions gave rise to influential theories of climates, of which Montesquieu, a reader of Addison and the author of *The Spirit of the Laws* (1748), is the best-known representative. Building on the idea that bodily relaxation increases in warm climates and diminishes in cold air, Montesquieu suggested that manly industrious activity is the domain of northern climates, whereas female lassitude pertains to southern regions. Moreover, he established a connection between climates and virtue, geography and morals: "In northern climates, you shall find peoples who have few vices, a sufficient number of virtues, and a lot of frankness and sincerity. Draw near the southern counties, and you will think you have left morality itself far behind: the liveliest passions proliferate crimes; each person seeks to take advantage of everyone else in ways that favor these same passions" (234). This climate *cum* topography theory would shape and influence a host of other eighteenth- and nineteenth-century writings by northern travelers.[9]

Initially, northern travelers ventured only to Naples, since, as Creuzé de Lesser wrote, "Europe ends in Naples and ends quite badly. Calabria, Sicily and all the rest are Africa" (cited in Mozzillo, *Viaggiatori stranieri* 9).[10] Following the discoveries of Herculaneum and Pompei in 1738 and 1748, respectively, and the revival of Greco-Roman and Hellenic traditions that ensued (well illustrated in Johann Joachim Winckelmann's writings on Greek art, *Gedanken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke in der Mahlerei und Bildhauer-Kunst* of 1755), travelers ventured beyond the kingdom's capital. Herman von Riedesel arrived in Sicily in 1767, while Patrick Brydone reached it in 1770 and Roland de la Platière reached it in 1776. Henry Swinburne visited Apulia, Calabria, and Sicily in 1770–1780.[11] Their *Briefe*, *Descriptions*, *Landscapes*, *Reisen*, and *Voyages* are too many for a full discussion,[12] though a few representative examples should provide a general view of the discourses surrounding the representations of Italy and its southern regions.

Like Addison and Montesquieu, the typical travelers were upper-class citizens who embarked on the Grand Tour for pleasure, but they also did so to complete their formal training and education, known in German culture as the *Bildungsreise*. Their writings are infused with memories of Classical learning and frequent citations from Homer, Theocritus, Cicero, Horace, Ovid, Statius, Virgil, and many more, often recalled in connection with a southern landscape dotted by ruins. For example, Johann Gottfried von Herder, in his *Briefe und Aufzeichnungen über eine Reise nach Italien (1788/89)*, writes, "I thank God for Naples [. . .] Paradise and Hell, Elysium and Tartaros have been invented here. Homer and Virgil have derived the eternal uniqueness of their poetry from a *single* region, a region that lies in front of my eyes looking on the right hand side of my window."[13] Similarly, in *Italienische Reise*, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe comments on the "poetic *Stimmung*" evoked by the "eminently classical ground"[14] of Sicily and claims that the inspirations for his tragedy *Nausikaa* were Palermo and Taormina (Fliri 76–77). But, as was the case with Addison, these accounts include less flattering depictions of the South. Next to the beautiful Mediterranean landscape and its ruins, another reality surfaces that speaks of criminality, degradation, destitution, illiteracy, and other social ills. Karl Ulisses von Salis-Marschlins, author of *Reisen in verschiedene Provinzen des Königreichs Neapel* (1793), describes Brindisi as full of shacks and yards infested by snakes, while the *Sassi* of Matera are obscene cave dwellings that horrify him. He also suggests that the diseases, malnutrition, poverty, and lack of education that affect the population are responsible for superstitious beliefs in werewolves and *tarantati* (Mozzillo, *Viaggiatori* 75).

Such assessments must be weighed against the crisis that ensued when rulers of the Ancien Regime failed to provide the economic and political reforms needed to face a changed world. The travelers' comments are a response to the present state of Italy as compared to the renaissance era, a time when Italian cities were models of cultural, economic, and social developments followed by most of Europe (Schneider, "Introduction" 4). Raised during

the Enlightenment, the more benign Grand Tour writers report on the cor-
ruption of the government and the misery of the people from the perspective
of history's teleological march toward progress. Thus, in his *Travels* of 1777,
Swinburne notes that an enlightened government could turn the Calabrese
people into heroes and conquerors (Mozzillo, *Viaggiatori* 68); Riedesel, on
the other hand, believes the *latifundia* system must be overcome, since it
creates rapacious overseers that fleece the population (ibid. 80). The South is
not solely described through Classical lenses and the perspectives dictated by
the progressive teleology of the Enlightenment. More problematic discourses
often affect its representation, as they pertain to civilizational hierarchies that
demote southerners while elevating northerners. Echoing Montesquieu,
when Riedesel calls for an end to the *latifundia* system, he also observes
that innovations in commerce, military science, and navigation are now the
purview of the more vigorous northern civilizations (ibid. 24). Other authors
point to the indolence of southern people and the lack of industriousness
witnessed in their cities, fretting that they might seduce northern travelers,
Protestant or not, to relinquish their cultural *ethos* and the teleology of prog-
ress that it entails. Frenchman Charles Dupaty writes, in *Lettres sur l'Italie en
1785* (1788), that all one does in Naples is sit back, be idle, and enjoy life,[15]
while Herder comments, in the already cited *Briefe*, that staying in Naples
impairs his ability to write and inspires only daydreaming.[16] Even the worka-
holic Goethe, in writing to Madame von Stein on May 25, 1787, reports,
"Here one becomes lazier by the day."[17]

Many of these travelers belonged to countries where the shift to the Atlan-
tic trade led to industrialization developments that impacted the public and
private spheres of life. In their commentaries, one thus detects the view that
the preindustrial Mediterranean offers a temporary antidote to the changes
brought about by modernization. There (often) emerges in writings by the
same travelers a vision of the Mediterranean filtered through the lenses of
a Rousseau-like utopia; the images of peasants and shepherds described in
the pages of Riedesel's *Reise durch Sicilie und Grossgriechenland* (1771) and
Roland de la Platière's *Lettres écrites de Suisse, d'Italie, de Sicile et de Malte*
(1780) remind one about the "good savages" described in *The Social Con-
tract*, *Heloïse*, or *Emile* (Mozzillo, *Viaggiatori* 33). Such vision merges not
only with the German idea of the Mediterranean as the *Lebenswelt*, a physical-
anthropological unity of elemental values (e.g., closeness to nature, hospital-
ity, joy, passion, simplicity, vitality) but also with the notion of Mediterranean
travel as a cure for pre-Romantic and Romantic spleens. Théophile Gautier,
who arrived in Italy in 1850, eloquently voiced the hopes invested in the
curative value of his travels in his *Quand on voyage* (1865): "When this dis-
ease overtakes you, your friends bore you, all of your female lovers, even
those who belong to others, put you to sleep and displease you [. . .] To
dissipate this particular spleen, the only recipe is a passport for Spain, Italy,
Africa or the Orient. This is the reason why I traveled to Venice [. . .] I was
curing my grey melancholy with strong doses of azure" (ibid. 38).

A new chapter in the history of this discourse is written between the late eighteenth and the midnineteenth centuries. The technological and scientific innovations that have followed the Industrial Revolution and the colonial advances in Africa and the Middle East by northern and central European states deepen the North-South divide, as the political, economic, and military power of these countries enables them to manipulate and control their relationships with their southern (and eastern) brethren. At this time, Europe's state monarchies are also consolidating into nation-states, embarking into an identity-building agenda that entails the institutionalization of national characteristics and geopolitical features carved out of "imagined communities"[18] that exist inside and outside the states' juridical and legal boundaries. If, as de Seta has noted, most early travel literature was written in Latin in the hope of disseminating the author's name (*L'Italia* 199), by the turn of the nineteenth century, writing in one's national language had become the norm—a further expression of the cultural nationalism that pervades the travelogues of this period (ibid. 200). Such process is illustrated in the ethnocentric rhetoric of Karl August Meyer, for whom all Italians could be painted in one broadly drawn portrait they would all resemble,[19] while Franz Löher, in *Sizilien und Neapel* (1864), comments that most Italians will forever be children who will never approach the maturity of people from the North.[20] Likewise, Hermann Allmers, in his *Römische Slendertage* (1870), considers Italians puerile, ruled by instability and curiosity and without the dignity, seriousness, and rectitude that befits the developed northerners.[21] These accounts, with many other negative ones collected in a vast body of *Reiseliteratur* by German writers, would eventually reify southern Italy as the other of the North, populating it with "illiterates, bandits, beasts, brigands, criminals, bad singers, ugly women, avid gamblers, ignorant people, misers, Mafiosi, impolite individuals, beggars, fleabags, lechers, dirty and cruel to animals" (Schenda 123).

The northern Europeans' assimilation of the Italians as the other in economic and civilizational terms also partakes in the tradition of Orientalism analyzed, in a different context, by Edward Said in *Orientalism* and *Culture and Imperialism*. There, Said notices that northern discourse tended to create Manichean distinctions between the West and the estranged East to establish models of superiority that would legitimate and justify colonial projects and civilizing missions. As in the examples that Said provides to show how Westerners constructed the Middle East through "Orientalizing" images, many northern travelers equated southerners with Africans and Orientals. In *Italienische Reise* (published in 1816–1817 and in an augmented edition in 1829), for example, Goethe describes the Neapolitan children he encounters as monkeys, while the southern dialects sounds to his northern ears as barbaric noises akin to the language of the Hottentots (Schenda 120).[22] Goethe's exoticization of the South was not unique. English and French writers also participated in this "Orientalizing" process. This should come as no surprise since, even though Italy was not the target of colonial projects carried out by England, France, Portugal, and Spain in areas outside the European continent, it still represented an important base for trades and

exchanges in a colonially organized geopolitical realm. As Schneider points out, "Italy was certainly affected by Orientalism. For although the imperial powers of the north did not envision the Italian peninsula as a land they had to colonize [. . .] it was nevertheless their goals that Italian resources and products circulate freely in international markets, that Italian markets be open to English and French manufacturers, and that Italian elites share in and support the world civilizational system that these powers believed it was their priority to create" ("Introduction" 5).

Southerners' Discourses: Toward a *Questione Meridionale*

How was this tradition of Mediterranean discursiveness received? What responses did the writings of the Jesuits and northern travelers available by the eighteenth century elicit from Italians themselves? How did the South respond to these discourses from the North? There does not exist a storehouse of travelogues and impressions by the peninsula's own travelers during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries comparable to that of northern travelers. De Seta suggests that the lack of documents is due to the political fragmentation of the peninsula, which lasted until the Savoy unified it in 1860: "This country, politically divided in many large and little states [. . .] had a poor knowledge of the different realities that composed it [. . .] unlike the large national European States (France, Spain, England) the peninsula was not politically unified and moral, religious and ethnic ties were not strong enough to confer homogeneity to what, as late as the Congress of Vienna, was simply a 'geographic expression'" (*L'Italia del Grand Tour* 17). Augusto Placanica believes that a lack of identity was a major contributing factor: "Unfortunately the Mezzogiorno has not known a significant flowering of documentary testimonies [. . .] through which a society with a strong sense of identity could look at itself and at its own past [. . .] It is perhaps for this reason that, for four centuries, the most vigorous and lived historical memory of the Mezzogiorno was delegated to the protagonists of the *Grand Tour*, that is, to foreign travelers" (3). Humanist and renaissance writers, like medieval authors before them, had produced accounts of travels, including Leandro Alberti's very popular guidebook, *Descrittione di tutta l'Italia*. Written in 1550, the guidebook described Alberti's journey along the Tyrrhenian coast from Genova to Calabria and up the Adriatic coast from Otranto all the way to Veneto, Friuli, and Istria (subsequent editions would add Sicily and the islands). Alberti profiled some 300 cities and 19 regions, but his itinerary differs sharply from the North/South conceptualization of many northern travelers. Unlike them, Alberti organizes space according to the relationships between town and countryside in terms of cultural and material exchange of goods and labor (Marino, "Introduction" 4–6) rather than from frameworks of civilizational hierarchies. Alberti's book underwent several editions between 1551 and 1631 (ibid. 4n6), indicating its popularity. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries did not produce an equivalent body

of work.[23] What remains is a past, lived memory of Italy by foreigners, since "in the mirror of the *Grand Tour* Italy acquires consciousness of itself; and the greatest contribution to the formation of this consciousness is given precisely by foreign travelers through their direct experience, as can be inferred by the literary sources, the diaries of journeys, [and] the practical guides" (de Seta, *L'Italia del Grand Tour* 17). Despite this tradition of stereotypical discourses, well into the nineteenth century most Italians felt that the South's backwardness was the result of poor governance and that, given the right leadership, the South could still turn around. At that point, the infamous *questione meridionale*, or southern question, had yet to emerge, coming to the fore only after Italy's unification in 1860.

Marta Petrusewicz discusses the factors that grew into the *questione* in the insightful essay "Before the Southern Question," where she frames the problem in a transnational context but also proposes 1848, rather than 1860, as the turning point for thinking about the South.[24] Petrusewicz goes back in time to 1734, when the Bourbons regained control over Italian territories lost in the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 and established the kingdom as a sovereign state, as opposed to the viceroyalties of the past. Charles of Bourbon (1734–1759) introduced a program of limited reforms designed to facilitate trade, commerce, and innovations, but poverty and famines continued throughout the 1760s. After the Jesuits were expelled (1767), Neapolitan Enlightenment thinkers debated the feudal, ecclesiastical, educational, and juridical reforms necessary to improve the kingdom and published journals to disseminate the social thought of Locke, Montesquieu, Newton, and Voltaire. In doing so, Enlightenment thinkers proffered widespread and harsh criticism for the *status quo*:

> First, the feudal institution of primogeniture and entailment, and the ecclesiastical institution of *mainmorte*, were faulted for immobilizing huge tracts of land, preventing the formation of a land market. Second, the inequity of the fiscal system burdened and stifled the entrepreneurial and laborious classes while favouring parasites. Third, baronial jurisdiction, never just, was made even more unfair and arbitrary by the indifference of its absentee administrators. Fourth, the ambiguity of the land tenure system, and in particular, the absence of clearly defined private property in land, made agricultural improvement impractical. Fifth, the poverty, ignorance, and superstition of the peasants hampered social and economic "improvement." (Petrusewicz, "Before" 30)

By showing areas that could be improved, these thinkers pushed a forward-moving agenda while denying that the South was an intractable problem: "Backwardness was held to be a question of relative position on a scale of comparative progress. England and France were far ahead, presenting those behind them with a picture of their future (not far ahead); Lombardy, Tuscany, and Prussia were ahead, although less distantly so; and Ireland was more or less at the same point as the Kingdom; while Russia and Poland had the farthest to go" (ibid. 41).

The French invasion of Italy and the events that befell the kingdom between 1799 and 1815[25] did not change the spirit of reform. Feudalism was abolished after the French conquest of 1806, and a new way of thinking was introduced by the invaders. In the words of Pietro Colletta, "Murat fell in 1815; but the laws, usages, opinions, and hopes which had been impressed on the *popolo* for ten years, did not fall with him" (cited in Petrusewicz, "Questione" 31). Indeed, when the Bourbons returned in 1815, the Restoration was milder than it had been in 1799. In 1820, Ferdinand granted a constitution (which he abrogated within a year), and once Ferdinand II ascended to the throne in 1830, he implemented new reforms, including the construction of a railroad system and the development of banking and industries. Intellectual life continued unabated, and the new generation, as cosmopolitan as the previous one, avidly read works by François René de Chateaubriand, Alphonse de Lamartine, Madame de Staël, Victor Hugo, Walter Scott, and others while resuming its contacts with northern Europe. Naples became an intellectual and culturally significant center even as the intelligentsia understood that the kingdom still needed more growth and reforms: "For Naples to catch up would require energy and effort; but the government was doing in general the right thing—building railroads, constructing roads [. . .] encouraging manufactures, modernizing prisons, and loosening some of the tariff regulations. Thus conceived, southern 'retardation' did not constitute a 'Question.' Intellectuals were severe in criticizing their country, but they had no inferiority complex. They even saw some advantages in backwardness" (ibid. 39).

By 1848, however, the kingdom found itself mired in the revolutions that were erupting all over Europe. Ferdinand, who had granted a constitution and the right of parliament, was seen as a ruler who could lead the country to further processes of reforms. Instead, by 1849, he had begun enforcing a most violent repression. The intelligentsia, for the third time in half a century (1799, 1815, and 1848), faced trials, executions, and exile. Discourses on the South changed, and ideas about the kingdom as a relatively backward place where reforms were possible gradually were replaced by the image of the *mezzogiorno* ("midday") as a place where corruption, degradation, and vice evinced a barbarity beyond redemption. These changed perceptions emerge in documents that precede the unification of the peninsula, like Francesco Trinchera di Ostuni's *La quistione napolitana*, where the kingdom is described as having "no sign of a civilized life, no civil institution, no educational establishment, private or public [. . .] no roads [. . .] no commerce, no art, [and] no industry" (ibid. 46). Similar sentiments are expressed in a letter by Giuseppe La Farina to Matteo Raeli on September 17, 1855: "The Bourbon government is the personification of barbarism [. . .] It is a *permanent* offence to civilization and Christianity [. . .] Through superstition and ignorance it brutalizes people."[26] In the words of Petrusewicz, "the eternally primitive nature of the South's institutions, the incompetence and selfishness of its absentee landowners, the greed and arbitrariness of its administrators, the grip of the Church, the weakness of the intellectuals, the passivity of the

popolo, mired in poverty and ignorance, crime and violence—all had become articulated as indelible themes [. . .] even before encountering the prejudices of the Piedmontese makers of Italy, the Southern Question had been born" ("Before" 46).

THE DISCOURSE OF *QUESTIONE*

Literally meaning an issue or problem, the *questione meridionale* born in the aftermath of 1848 became fully operative after the unification of the peninsula in 1860. Its genesis is found in the publication of Pasquale Villari's *Le lettere meridionali* in 1875, a work generally taken as the launching point for the school of *meridionalisti*.[27] This was followed in close succession by Leopoldo Franchetti's 1876 study, *Condizioni politiche e amministrative della Sicilia*; Franchetti and Sydney Sonnino's *La Sicilia nel 1876*; and their work as coeditors of the journal *Rassegna settimanale* between 1878 and 1882.

On October 21, 1860, a popular vote, or *plebiscito*, extended the Savoy, Piedmontese rule to the entire peninsula. Ten years later, in 1870, Italian troops entered Rome, proclaiming it capital of Italy and achieving territorial unity. During these early decades of nationhood, the discourse on the South spread to take "its radical, oppositional contours—North versus South, advanced industrial versus backward agrarian, well-governed 'civic' versus clientelistic" (Schneider, "Introduction" 34). Images of the South as underdeveloped, backward, racially degenerate, lacking civic consciousness, and unable to engage in any form of collective action began to multiply in the works of Italians, as well as foreigners, across a number of fields. To some extent, they remain with us to this day, as the recent phenomenon of *Leghismo* and its federalist agendas testify.[28]

A number of interpretations have been advanced to explain the resilient catalog of ills consolidated in the *questione meridionale*. For some, the events of 1860 weakened or even destroyed the South's economy, since the Savoys' liberalized agenda favored northern industrialists and/or southern agrarian landowners at the expense of the region's trade and labor. Duggan notes that the monarchy sought to balance the huge public debt accumulated by Piedmont in the 1850s with a 54 percent increase in direct taxes and the confiscation of millions of hectares of church and communal lands. This confiscation was especially detrimental to the poor, whose welfare relied on monastic houses and a share of the commons. With regard to labor, the new state introduced a military conscription that lasted five years and was fiercely resisted by Sicilians, unaccustomed to the draft and economically dependent on work traditionally performed by males (133–142). For others, unification turned the South into a "colonial" source of human goods and commodities for the North, as claimed by Francesco Saverio Nitti and Napoleone Colajanni (*Settentrionali e Meridionali d'Italia*) in 1898 (Wong 39–42). Carlo Cattaneo questioned the motives of Piedmont and the new nation's "Piedmontisization," as did Arcangelo Ghisleri, who, in *La questione meridionale nella soluzione del problema italiano*, saw the relationship

between Piedmont and the former southern kingdom as one of dominator and dominated, oppressor and oppressed (ibid. 40). Gaetano Salvemini, in *La questione meridionale e il federalismo*, summarized these views by comparing the subjugation of the South to the transformation of the Lombard-Veneto into a colonial asset by the Austrian empire: "Today southern Italy is to northern Italy as the Lombard-Veneto were to other countries of the Austrian empire before 1859. Austria absorbed taxes from Italy and poured beyond the Alps [. . .] And the Lombards were thus held back weary and deprived of initiative, and it was by this time admitted by all that the Lombard people were 'nothing'" (cited in Wong 42).

Further explanations for the developments of the southern question have been advanced more recently. They take into account factors internal to national politics between North and South—the Savoy kings and the former Kingdom of the Two Sicilies—and stress the international forces that contributed to the consolidation of the *questione*. Jane Schneider, for example, has written of "processes of displacement and complicity" by Italian elites who transferred "their anxieties about belonging to Europe on that part of the country that is geographically and, in their minds, culturally most distant from the European 'core.'" These were coupled with "the tendency for southern intellectuals and liberal élites to articulate a profound critique of their native society and government, becoming the interlocutors of northerners' negative views" ("Introduction" 8). Like Schneider, John Dickie (*Darkest Italy* 52–82; "Stereotypes" 114–147) and Nelson Moe ("'Altro che Italia'" 53–89; *The View from the Vesuvius* 13–36) argue for the impact of transnational factors in the creation of the *questione*, explaining that this discourse often borrowed from European representations of the South disseminated in the writings of the travelers of the Grand Tour.

What remains beyond doubt is that by the mid-1870s, with the denunciations of the conditions of the South by the already mentioned Villari, Franchetti, and Sonnino,[29] the idea of a southern immobility started to become widely accepted. It eventually solidified around the concept of *blocco storico*, or "historic block," whose early articulations date from the end of the nineteenth century in the work of Antonio De Viti De Marco and Francesco Saverio Nitti[30] but were fully explored by Gaetano Salvemini's *La questione meridionale* and other essays later collected in *Scritti sulla questione meridionale* (1896–1955). *Blocco storico* described the alliance of southern landowners and northern industrialists sanctioned by tariffs imposed in the 1880s and 1890s to protect northern steel and textile industries and southern wheat from the competition of foreign markets. The *blocco* favored industrial expansion in the North but led to even graver paralyses in the South. More important, the idea of the *blocco* solidified a binary conceptual framework of two Italies: a northern Italy, identified with modernity that belonged among the constellation of leading European nations; and a southern Italy, seen as a historical, cultural, moral, and political pathology that needed to be cured for it to reach the developments of the North.

As long as the South was conceptualized in the economic terms of the *blocco storico*, conditions of underdevelopment and backwardness still left open the possibility of change, given the right material conditions. By the turn of the nineteenth century, another discourse on the South was taking shape. With the advent of the positivist anthropology and criminology of Cesare Lombroso (1835–1909) and of his pupils Giuseppe Sergi (1841–1936), Enrico Ferri (1856–1929), and Alfredo Niceforo (1876–1960),[31] southern diversity was essentialized in biological terms: northerners carried Aryan or Celtic genes, while southerners bore inferior genes that also evinced a natural predisposition toward crime.[32] These racial theories were confusing and contradictory, as Italians were variously associated with Latins and Semites (Lombroso), Greco-Latins (Ferri), Mediterraneans (Niceforo), and Aryans and Italics (Sergi). Dissenters soon objected, especially from the school of "sociological criminologists" (Gibson 111). Both Filippo Turati, author of "Il delitto e la questione sociale" (1882), and Colajanni, in *Latini e anglosassoni (razze inferiori e razze superiori)*, questioned racial theory. Colajanni pointed out the many inconsistencies of racial theories, arguing that nations, not races, defined people. More important, he considered absurd the notion of racial superiority, calling it an "anthroposociological fantasy" (*Latini* 42–43). Nevertheless, "the illogic of racial reasoning among criminal anthropologists did not vitiate its importance" (Gibson 114), leading to a fusion of biology, morality, and psychology in describing southern peoples for years to come. More damagingly, racial theory promoted a determinist view of the South, since underdevelopment and backwardness were no longer just the effect of the *blocco storico* but a natural destiny and southern retardation was an effect of biology rather than history. Antonio Gramsci well captured the sense of the South's inevitable backwardness in his *Prison Notebooks*:

> The "poverty" of the South was "historically" inexplicable to the Northern popular masses [. . .] They thought that if the South made no progress after being freed from the obstacles that the Bourbon rule had placed in the way of modern development, this meant that the causes of the poverty were not external but internal [. . .] There remained but one explanation: the organic incapacity of the people, their barbarity, their biological inferiority [. . .] These already widespread opinions (Neapolitan *lazzaroni* had long been legendary) were firmly established and even theorized by positivist sociologists [. . .] acquiring the validity of "scientific truths" at a time of scientific superstitions. Hence [. . .] the North persisted in the belief that the South represented Italy's "dead weight," the conviction that the modern industrial civilization of the North would have made great progress without this "dead weight," etc. (143–145).

Transformation and change had no place in this conceptual framework. As Wong has argued in her examination of the *questione meridionale's* reified discourse from 1861 to 1911, assumptions that the South was in a state of racial, cultural, civilizational, and socioeconomic decay traversed the

liberal state governments, from the Historic Right (1861–1876) and New Left (1876–1887) to the ministries of Francesco Crispi (1887–1891, 1891–1896) and Giovanni Giolitti (1901–1914). As such, they shaped the discourse of colonization before World War I and of Italian emigration between 1876 and 1914, when over 14 million people, most of them southerners, left Italy (Wong 92–141). Whereas imperialist rhetoric appropriated the tropes of meridionalist discourse and pseudoscientific theories of race to justify the state's ambitions over Ethiopia, Eritrea, Libya, and Somalia, emigration was explained "through the already existing lens of Other-ing" by appropriating the themes of the southern question "(poverty, illiteracy, criminality, indolence, individuality), translated into the scientific language of physiognomy (race, ethnicity, and biology)" (ibid. 147).

Antonio Gramsci questioned the lack of historical understanding that subtended such views. Like Colajanni and Turati, Gramsci placed cultural change at the center of his Marxist inquiry. Familiar, from his childhood in Sardinia, with the plight of southern Italians and having read Gaetano Salvemini's work, Gramsci naturally examined the destitute conditions of the southern peasantry. By 1926, he had devoted a long reflection to the topic of southern peasant culture. Against a tradition of representations of the South as the breeding ground of brigands, criminals, and assassins, Gramsci made a claim for the value of southern culture as a practical, commonsensical approach to problems.[33] His years spent in Turin, where he moved in 1911 to study at the *Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia*, convinced him that northern Italy could not be simply equated with modernization, since backwardness, superstition, and provincialism existed there as well. Gramsci also began to question the Enlightenment's assumption that social classes have similar methods of cultural elaboration based on clear and logical ideas. Instead, cultural emancipation, as a form of dialectical relation with society, could also come by way of imagination, an idea that Gramsci derived from Giambattista Vico's *Scienza nuova* (Gramsci, *Scritti* 101) to express the "organic intellectual's" articulation of the contradictions of society not only through reason but through sentiments and passions as well: "The 'organic intellectual' can know and feel because, as Vico suggested, she is moved by the force of the 'imagination.' The imagination is *dramatic fantasy*, a faculty that can vividly represent the problems and hopes of society to the mind and sentiment. Thus politics is not simply a strategic calculus, or the implementation of an abstract model. Politics is a combination of reason with an empathetic disposition" (Urbinati 144).

Despite such suggestive formulations, Gramsci argued that peasants exhibited "a 'generic' hatred [. . .] still 'semi-feudal'" toward society (Schneider, "Introduction" 14). This hatred, which resulted from passions such as fear and rage, fueled by necessity, stalled peasants from becoming subjects of history capable of acting in the political realm of freedom and ethics. The rebellion of the peasants was trapped in a prepolitical stage, unable to reach a revolutionary class consciousness. Otherwise stated, peasant culture

remained the expression of a politically servile class, whose opposition was limited to the "mechanical and objective":

> Folklore should [. . .] be studied as a "conception of the world and life" implicit to a large extent (in time and space) to strata of society and in opposition (also for the most part implicit, mechanical and objective) to "official" conceptions of the world (or in a broader sense, the conception of the cultured parts of historically determinate societies) that have succeeded one another in the historical process [. . .] This conception of the world is not elaborated and systematic because, by definition, the people [. . .] cannot possess conceptions which are elaborated, systematic and politically organized and centralized in their albeit contradictory development. (Gramsci, "Observations" 189)

To Gramsci, the possibility of peasant emancipation lay in the alliance with the urban proletariat, the northern factory workers whose social unrest he had witnessed during the years spent in the industrial city of Turin. After the revolutionary moment, this alliance could bring changes not only to urban centers but also to southern Italy, where cooperatives could be created, land socialized, and the agricultural process made more productive through mechanization and rationalization. Gramsci further elaborated the concepts of *egemonia* (hegemony), *blocco storico* (historic block), and *intellettuale organico* (organic intellectual) in his *Prison Notebooks*, written while imprisoned between 1929 and 1935.[34] In them, Gramsci restated a more nuanced understanding of the *questione meridionale* as well as of southern folklore. However, he reaffirmed the importance of an alliance with northern workers, suggesting that his reevaluation of southern culture as historically significant to forge counterhegemonic action was not forceful enough to displace the totalizing discourses that had developed throughout the centuries.

Discourses on the South experienced a bracketing during the fascist years. Mussolini was aware of the existence of cultural, economic, and social diversities. On the cultural front, he pursued an aggressive program to bind Italians to Fascism by direct intervention in all spheres of life, from language and education to leisure activities. But Mussolini also realized that poor socioeconomic conditions were leading to agrarian revolts and occupations of uncultivated estates, particularly since the government's promises to give land to those who had enlisted in World War I (among whom 58 percent were peasants) had not materialized (Sabatucci 3). Although riots were a response to widespread disappointment, so was emigration. In a dramatic surge to the diaspora that began after unification, by the late 1920s one-quarter of Italian-born citizens resided abroad, casting dark shadows on the prospects of the young Italian nation-state and its fascist leadership. Therefore, Mussolini not only promoted cultural initiatives to bind emigrant communities abroad to the fascist nation at home but also announced in *Il Popolo d'Italia* that Fascism was committed to providing "land for those who till it" (Seton-Watson 574). Among the initiatives spearheaded by Minister Serpieri in 1924 for the so-called fascist rural policy were the sale or lease of unused estates, the

agricultural campaign known as the *battaglia del grano* ("battle of the wheat") of 1926, the *bonifica integrale* ("land reclamation") of 1928, and the creation of agricultural colonies in the Agro Romano, the Basso Volturno, and the Tavoliere di Puglia as well as in Sardinia and Sicily.[35] Aggressive colonial campaigns in North and East Africa were also presented as a way to acquire new territories and solve the problems caused by an oversupply of labor and a large landless peasantry now cast as conquering colonizer.

A major component of Fascist rural policy was also the rhetoric of "ruralism." Images of bucolic landscapes and content peasants were disseminated through the state-supported *Istituto Luce*, while Mussolini's speeches frequently extolled physical labor, an austere lifestyle, solid moral values, and large peasant families. Yet, despite the overt exaltation of the Italian rural world, the agricultural policies widened the gap between the North and the South, since regions such as the Bassa Padana, Emilia Romagna, and Veneto benefited the most. More important, bands of *squadristi* were deployed to end workers' unrest in the countryside and win the support of the landowners, which was essential to the fascist state. To appease the same groups, in 1924 and 1927 the few remaining common-land pastures were closed off, while migration from rural areas to the cities became virtually forbidden in 1928. By 1934, the funds for land reclamation had been depleted, and the conquest of African territories proved ineffective at stemming Italy's diaspora: "Collectively, Italy's colonies had attracted only 350,000 settlers by 1940—less than the number of Italians living in either New York or Buenos Aires, and only slightly more than the number of migrants who left Italy in any year during the 1920s" (Gabaccia 144–145).

Overall, Fascism sought to minimize, if not hide, diversities while projecting a positive view of the nation. Mussolini went as far as publishing the journal *Questioni meridionali* with the intent of negating the existence of the *questione* itself or presenting it as resolved. As Renato Cascia proffered in *Enciclopedia italiana*, a publication sponsored by Fascism, "it is no longer legitimate to speak today of a 'questione meridionale' [. . .] All traces of contrast, of antagonism, of competing interests have disappeared from the souls thanks to the unity brought about by the first World War and by Fascism" (151). With the fall of Mussolini and the urgency of the postwar reconstruction and European integration, Italy, and its South in particular, was again perceived as a place of backwardness and underdevelopment, and the tropes of the *questione meridionale* returned.

Post–World War II Discourses: The Case of Anthropology and Its Reverberations in the Arts

As Italy's postwar governments pursued a northward economic vision, the South reemerged as the space that delayed the country's capitalist progress and development. Such perception encouraged the agrarian reforms announced by Antonio Segni in 1948 and the passage of laws like the *Legge*

Sila and the *Legge stralcio* that broke up tracts of land in excess of three hundred hectares. These reforms were also enacted in northern regions, but the main areas of concern were Abruzzo, Molise, Puglia, Sardinia, and Sicily. In 1950, the *Cassa per il Mezzogiorno* was established.[36] A state-sponsored program with budgets in the billions of liras, the *Cassa* spearheaded many infrastructure initiatives, financing road and transportation systems, power plants, and electrical grids. Starting in 1957, it pushed aggressive industrialization, building chemical plants, refineries, and car factories in many southern regions to establish the so-called *poli di sviluppo* ("development poles"). Regardless, visions of generalized southern immobility continued to dominate discourses of the period, both within Italy and abroad.

These discourses resonate in what is perhaps the best-known twentieth-century work of Mediterranean historiography, Fernand Braudel's influential *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* (1949). In the preface to the first edition,[37] after opening with a *Lebenswelt*-flavored statement ("I have loved the Mediterranean with passion, no doubt because I am a northerner [. . .] I have joyfully dedicated long years of study to it [. . .] In return, I hope that a little of this joy and a great deal of Mediterranean sunlight will shine from the pages of this book" [17]), Braudel lays out his project: to demonstrate the unity of Mediterranean civilization as *longue durée*. For Braudel, this unity exists in an arrested temporality that must be recovered from *l'histoire événementielle*, "the history of events: surface disturbances, crests of foam" that "we must learn to distrust" if we are to find "the deeper realities of history, of the running waters on which our frail barks are tossed like cockleshells" and if we are "to chart those underlying currents, often noiseless, whose direction can only be discerned by watching them over long periods of time" (21).[38] Within Braudel's lyrical prose, the South emerges, once again, as a space of arrested development—a region where time stands still.

Braudel's work exerted considerable influence, paradoxically not in the field of historiography, but in the anthropology of the 1950s and 1960s. Indeed, following Braudel, microhistory became more prominent as scholars moved away from totalizing histories and the continuities that they trace. Metanarratives lost their appeal as structuralism faded in the postmodern, and new historicist analysis became the vogue. In the words of Horden and Purcell, "the writing of Mediterranean *historiography* may [. . .] be seen as having reached a pause with Braudel's work [. . .] Historiography *of* the Mediterranean—the type of which Braudel was the greatest exponent—has mostly vanished from the scene" (ibid. 3), having been replaced by "history *in* the region" (ibid. 2).[39] Braudel's legacy is traceable in the work of 1950s and 1960s anthropologists.[40] Unlike classical anthropology, which often focused on non-European cultures, postwar-era anthropology turned renewed attention toward southern Europe, especially countries like Greece, Spain, and, of course, Italy.[41] Scholars sought to demonstrate the unity of the Mediterranean region by isolating archaic, traditional sociocultural traits presumably shared by these societies and sharply distinct from northern European ones:

"A pre-industrial economy, against the industrial one of the North;—political systems based on clientelism and *patronage*, against the 'democracy of opinion' of the North;—extreme immobility of social status and roles [. . .] prevalence of predetermined social relations, in particular familial ones [. . .] priority of local and family interests [. . .] low priority given to issues of general interests and civic values" (Dei 23).

Representative works of this postwar anthropological revisiting are Julian Alfred Pitt-Rivers's *The People of the Sierra* (1954),[42] Edward Banfield's *Amoral Familism: The Moral Basis of a Backward Society* (1958), John Campbell's *Honour, Family and Patronage* (1964), and John George Peristiany's *Honor and Shame* (1966). In his work, Banfield promotes the village of Montegrano in Lucania (in reality, Chiaromonte) as symbol of the backwardness of the Italian South and the Mediterranean. He imputes this backwardness to an excessive attachment to the interests of the nuclear family at the expense of the common good, resulting in an amoral type of familism. By furthering the interests of small nuclear groups through agonistic divisions, familism descends into clientelism and patronage politics that prevent the development of broadly shared values and civic habits. Whereas Banfield presented an image of Mediterranean society as a fragmented constellation of competing family units, Pitt-Rivers, Campbell, and Peristiany pursued the so-called negative egalitarian vision (Dei 25–28): in Mediterranean societies, a high degree of cohesiveness was produced by shared moral codes founded in honor and shame, while material accumulation and intellectual differences caused sharp stratifications in status. This moral code was considered negative because it prevented capitalist forms of social organization and was therefore responsible for a state of economic backwardness and stagnation. Moreover, since this code was strictly dependent on female chastity and modesty, it confined women to traditional gender roles, retarding modernization even further. Anthropology's focus on backwardness and arrested development also led to endless examinations of folklore (e.g., religious practices, magic rituals, and pilgrimages) seen as relics of a pre-Christian tribal past and therefore adduced as additional evidence of the static, ahistorical nature of Mediterranean societies.

These findings by postwar anthropologists were amply criticized on methodological and epistemological grounds. The will to recover traditional cultural elements often led anthropologists to conduct fieldwork on exceptionally remote villages to better argue for the Mediterranean as a timeless space that lacked historical renewal. In the footsteps of Said, Michael Herzfeld and Joao de Piña-Cabral have detected in much Mediterranean anthropology the presence of "Mediterraneanism"—that is, of an Orientalizing, imperial gaze that led scholars to exoticize and homogenize areas of extreme diversity into immutable essences while disregarding dramatic social, economic, and cultural changes that had taken place in most areas of the Mediterranean basin following World War II.[43]

One notable exception among postwar anthropologists was ethnologist Ernesto De Martino, who, much like Edward Evans-Princhard, the author

of *Anthropology and History* (1961), wished to reconcile anthropology and history. After studying religious phenomena in the Third World in *Naturalismo e storicismo nell'etnologia* (1941), De Martino turned his attention to southern Italian ritual practices. In *Il mondo magico* (1948) and *Sud e magia* (1959), he explored phenomena such as *tarantismo*,[44] mourning and funereal lamentations, and magic and sorcery practices, including *malocchio* ("evil eye"), *fattura* ("spell") and *fascinazione* ("hypnotic obsession"). Since his ethnographic work rested on the underlying assumption that culture, both high and low, translates biological reactions into symbolic practices of meaning, he recovered peasants' beliefs and rituals from a condition of ontological inferiority and irrational primitivism. In his 1959 study of rituals in Lucania, *Sud e magia*, he argued that the practices of magic—the evil eye and other rituals of conjuring—were born of a "crisis of presence" originating from unstable existential conditions but were also a reaction to it, as a way to maintain the integrity of the self under threat.[45] In addition, and most important for this discussion, he tied these practices to history, thereby countering what he called the evolutionism and functionalism of anthropology.[46] Thus conceived, magic and superstitions resulted from a relationship between peasants' popular culture and history that questioned presumed notions of southern culture ahistoricity and immobility. Since this relationship had solidified in a long tradition of ritual practices and meanings originating from a "crisis of presence," De Martino laid bare how this culture was not a self-enclosed world, a relics of history, but expressed historical agency in its response to external conditions of threat that could be natural catastrophes but also historically and culturally determined events. As Annalisa Di Nola summarized, "magic is hence endowed with a very important role in De Martino's view: namely the task of reconstituting and consolidating the jeopardized 'presence.' It achieves this goal by enacting all its power of moulding and reorganization *vis-à-vis* the chaos that could arise out of a precarious situation. When the 'presence' threatens to collapse [. . .] magic intervenes, translating that passivity into an activity, reintroducing the shaping power of culture" (Di Nola 161). De Martino suggested a further level of historicity in the link, within a single history's domain, between high culture and folklore, Christian practices and popular beliefs, and subaltern and hegemonic levels. In *Morte e pianto rituale*, De Martino established these connections by tying the Christian figure of the crying Mary, and her resignation to death, to pagan mourning rituals. In *Sud e magia*, he showed how *fascinazione* mimicked Catholic rites (16), while also arguing for its more "rational" uses in the Neapolitan culture of the Enlightenment (130, 136), illustrating, once again, how popular rituals partook to history. Finally, in *La terra del rimorso* (translated into an English version as *The Land of Remorse*), he established a measure of permeability between the orthodoxy of Saint Paul as a healing figure symbolized in the eighteenth century by the spider *taranta* and the ritual of *tarantismo* in Puglia.

It would be tempting to see in De Martino's historicized approach to the study of ethnography "unsuspected domains of autonomy, hidden-well

springs of oppositions to the industrial capitalist civilizational system and its multiple, nested Orientalist discourses" (Schneider, "Introduction" 18), comparable to Fernando Ortiz's idea of the counterpoint as indicative of resistance by the cultural peripheries (in *Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar*) or to the Indian subaltern studies group elaboration of a peasant consciousness of community and internal alliances (i.e., Partha Chatterjee's *The Nation and its Fragments*). Ultimately, De Martino could not take this step. In a number of essays from the 1950s[47] and in his *La fine del mondo* (377– 397), De Martino commented on progressive versus traditional folklore and even noted that a critical ethnocentrism could lead to reassess the foundations and the values that derive from Western rational attitudes. However, his work did not go beyond tracing the relational interaction between levels of cultures belonging to the same history. In short, peasant culture was not a locus of resistance to an alternative episteme but, rather, a more reactive type of expression that would disappear with changed structural conditions, when the values of social progress held by Western Enlightenment would become the shared patrimony of a unified Italian national culture: "For De Martino, questions of 'progress' have to do with a two-sided historical movement: (1) towards increasingly 'rational' solutions to human problems; and (2) towards a kind of consciousness that affords the individual greater possibility of acting as a subject rather than an object in history; of making choices that afford a measure of 'presence' in the world. Popular religion, at least as found in De Martino's ethnographic studies of Southern Italy, seems to provide little basis for such progress, though it contains that potential" (Saunders, "The Magic" 195).[48]

De Martino's work remains important, since it points toward an understanding of southern peasant culture as exhibiting internal dynamism, while evoking a level of resistance to modernization through the survival of ancient, archaic codes. It represents an exception in postwar anthropological discourses that approached Mediterranean cultures as unchanged and unaffected by internal evolution and external pressure. Conversely, the fastening onto Braudelian categories of historical continuity by others disregarded the stratifications within Mediterranean and southern Italian societies as well as the fundamental transformations that were occurring in the post–World War II era. The South continued to be reified as the other of European-Atlantic modernity in the work not only of anthropologists but also of post–World War II Italian culture. For decades, narrators, filmmakers, painters, and photographers disseminated images of Italy, and especially its southern regions, as areas unaltered by change. This enabled, in its more positive outcomes, a nostalgic return to pristine Mediterranean lands and to a mythical culture of origins; in its more negative outcomes, it depicted an unredeemable and unchanging horror. Walter Pedullà, in studying Italian narrative from 1941 to 1975, has argued that in well-known works such as Elio Vittorini's *Conversazione in Sicilia* (1941) and Vitaliano Brancati's *Don Giovanni in Sicilia* (1941) and *Il bell'Antonio* (1949), tradition and nostalgia occupy a central position. Likewise, in Elsa Morante's *L'isola di Arturo* (1957), the South is

the space of mythical archetypes, where nature is opposed to history. The South as a space unaltered by change also emerges in many postwar reportage fiction, including Carlo Levi's *Cristo si è fermato a Eboli* (1945), Anna Maria Ortese's *Il mare non bagna Napoli* (1953), and Giovanni Russo's *Baroni e contadini* (1955), where descriptions of the South's stagnating conditions are meant to bring awareness to the need for change. These representations of immobility acquire new heights with Tomasi di Lampedusa's *Il gattopardo* (1958), a novel that was a commercial success in the postwar era but whose image of the South is that of "antihistory" (200). Conversely, for Pedullà, works that might have escaped these representations are Raffaele La Capria's *Un giorno di impazienza* (1952) and *Ferito a morte* (1961), where the diversity of southern images transcends essentialism, and Leonardo Sciascia's reportage stories and novels *Le parrocchie di Regalpetra* (1956), *Il giorno della civetta* (1961), *A ciascuno il suo* (1965), and *Il consiglio di Egitto* (1963), which stress the impact of historical events while dislocating the South from clearly locatable geographical spaces, thus highlighting the universal nature of these events. Echoing the findings of Pedullà, Italo Moscati's study on postwar cinema lists endless cinematic productions centered on either nostalgic images of southern paradise or the unchanging nature of a South fraught with social ills. Among the films he mentions are the melodramas and crime films of Pietro Germi, Francesco Rosi, and Luchino Visconti and the comedic renditions of Mauro Bolognini, Luigi Comencini, Mario Monicelli, Dino Risi, and Lina Wertmüller. In the visual arts, Michela Scolaro notes endless series of "sun, sea, cacti [. . .] the luxuriant Mediterranean nature" (106) in Italian paintings, with the exception of Renato Guttuso, whose images remain icons of the *questione meridionale* coupled with a utopian vision of southern redemption. Gabriele D'Autilia's examination of photographers Gianni Berengo Gardin, Mimmo Castellani, Lanfranco Colombo, Ando Gilardi, Toni Nicolini, Giuseppe Pinna, and Giacomo Pozzi-Bellini echoes Scolaro's assessment of Guttuso, inasmuch as their works stress the poverty of the people and of the southern landscape. D'Autilia notes that one of the most interesting photographers, Enzo Sellerio, refused this paradigm, opting instead for photography capable of capturing southern diversity. However, by the 1960s, he had abandoned photography to avoid being part of a cultural industry that transformed the South into a reservoir of endless iconic clichés for mass consumption (94–95).

Discourses of the *Neomeridionalismo*

Despite (and perhaps as a response to) the pervasive representation of southern backwardness in all fields of culture, from the 1980s a new discourse from the South emerged in the work of *neomeridionalismo*, the body of revisionist interpretation produced by scholars of southern Italy. Publishing in *Studi storici*, *Quaderni storici*, and especially in *Meridiana*,[49] these scholars[50] clustered around *IMES* (*Istituto Meridionale di Storia e Scienze Sociali*), founded by Piero Bevilacqua and Augusto Placanica in 1986. Together,

they articulated a research agenda to break free of the *meridionalismo* of the southern question that, from unification under the liberal-oriented Savoy monarchy well into the post–World War II era, had shaped the discursive tradition of the South. Indeed, the old *meridionalismo* had created the illusion of a homogenous southern periphery that, unexaminable outside the framework of historical paralysis and economic and social stagnation, was explained by a combination of the irrational use of natural resources and the deficiency in the entrepreneurial skills of southern populations. By the 1980s, scholars such as Giuseppe Barone (1983), Piero Bevilacqua and Augusto Placanica (1985), Luigi Masella (1983), Angelo Massafra (1988), and Biagio Salvemini (1984) had highlighted southern regional diversity as well as the many examples of economic and social changes experienced by the South. A new image of the South emerges from this intense microhistorical work that points to the region's entrepreneurial vitality or, as Jonathan Morris has explained, to the presence of "a set of 'rational' responses to human (e.g., societal) and physical (e.g., climatic) factors [. . .] in response to changing conditions that could not, therefore, be explained away by historians as relics of a previous age" (5). A central concern of these scholars is the reexamination of the *latifundia* estates, the vast grain-producing land holdings of Calabria, Apulia, and western Sicily, long considered relics of feudalism. Studies by Aldo Cormio (1983), Anton Blok (1985), Salvatore Lupo (1990), and Marta Petrusewicz (*Latifundium* 1996) demonstrate how traditional wheat growing and transhumant grazing during fallow periods were combined with value-added cash crops, such as olives and citrus fruits, to allow flexibility and dynamism as a counter to the volatility of markets. Other works reexamine family networks and patron-client relationships as sophisticated forms of organizations rather than signs of backwardness, explicitly responding to Banfield's already mentioned *Amoral Familism* and other works of postwar anthropology. Simona Piattoni, for example, recasts clientelism as a "more 'civic' style of politics" (239)—a "virtuous clientelism" that enabled rudimentary forms of civic culture and therefore contributed to the formation of a southern "public good" (239). Besides reassessing the dynamism of southern economies and societies from the nineteenth century to the post–World War II era, the *neomeridionalisti's* microhistorical inquiries account for the diversity of experiences of Italy's many southern regions in the Bourbon kingdom. In addition, they engage in sustained discourse analyses to reconstruct how the repertoire of images of the South as undisciplined, irrational, lacking a civic culture, and racially and morally degraded had been disseminated across symbolic and cultural practices, from literature, poetry, and theater to statistics, public policies, scientific accounts, and so on.

The importance of the *neomeridionalisti's* work on a south "without *meridionalismo*," to reprise Giuseppe Giarrizzo's felicitous 1992 title, *Meridione senza meridionalismo*, cannot be underestimated. It is fundamental to understand contemporary rereadings of the Italian South and the Mediterranean that have emerged with the demise of the Soviet Union, the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the new geocultural and geopolitical realities of the post–Cold War

era. However, there were limits to the revisionism of *neomeridionalismo*. Critiques of Orientalist representations of the Italian South, for example, often did not question what enabled Orientalism in the first place—that is, Eurocentric Occidentalism as a foundational system of thought. As a result, *neomeridionalismo* remained within the frames of imperial geohistorical categories (see Fernando Coronil's formulation), as they articulated the South from within hegemonic Western concepts of Modernization Theory and its correlatives of progress and development (i.e., the analyses of *latifundia* estates based on principles of economic rationality and maximization of profitability; the Bourbon Kingdom's class structure reinterpreted in entrepreneurial terms; or family networks and patron-client relationships interpreted as prebourgeois models of civic culture). The awareness of the limits of revisionist interpretations of the Italian South developed by *IMES* and *Meridiana* is precisely what would lead to the creation of a discourse from the South. As we will illustrate in the following chapters by examining philosophical and social thought, cultural production, and artistic practices, this is a discourse that probes the myths of progress and rationality produced and reproduced by Eurocentric Occidentalism. In doing so, it claims a southern and Mediterranean epistemological autonomy and differential identity that emerges from and is issued by the South itself.

Geophilosophies of the Mediterranean

From Massimo Cacciari and Franco Cassano to Mario Alcaro and Beyond

An Italian geophilosophical discourse on the Mediterranean emerged powerfully in the mid-1990s. Arising and inscribed within a spatially determined Mediterranean culture, this discourse originates from an idea of space understood in its geographic, material dimension but also as a symbolic element that determines, to a degree, the subject's cultural formations and interpretative horizons.[1] In this chapter, we consider the impact that Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari, Jacques Derrida, and Michel Foucault, among others, have had in initiating a reflection on the Mediterranean in an era of accelerated globalization and so-called Europeanization. Our objective is not to chart a genealogy or deny the specificity of the Italian inquiry but rather to account for cultural and sociohistorical developments that allow one to understand Italy's geophilosophical turn. We then discuss Italian intellectuals associated with this thought, focusing on philosophers, political scientists, sociologists, and scholars of law and jurisprudence whose work has heavily influenced geophilosophical inquiries in contemporary Italy.

Italian Geophilosophies in Context

Italian geophilosophies of the Mediterranean need to be partially contextualized within postcolonial and subaltern studies' trenchant critique of Orientalism and Eurocentrism. In this sense, the work of Edward Said (already mentioned in Chapter 2) is a point of reference we cannot disregard. Said's studies profoundly influenced the critical agenda of subaltern cultures beyond the Islamic Middle East, since they enabled the tracing of

Orientalist discourses in other places where Western imperialist dominance was active, with its correlatives of racism, xenophobia, and political and economic expansionism. In an Italian context, Said's influence emerges in the new discourse about Italy's South found in the work of *neomeridionalisti* scholars who, clustered around the *Istituto Meridionale di Storia e Scienze Sociali*, revisited discourses of southern Italian inferiority that had emerged with the *questione meridionale* but whose origins reach back to earlier centuries.[2] By the 1980s, postcolonial and subaltern studies' critical agenda had moved beyond retracing discursive formations and toward critiquing the foundations of Eurocentrism itself, intersecting the postmetaphysical inquiries of Derrida, Deleuze, Guattari, and Foucault. This intersection led to the questioning of northern epistemologies grounded in the sovereignty of the Cartesian subject and the teleological path of history and to a critical examination of the grand narratives of enlightened reason, instrumental rationality, progress, and development.

Postcolonial theory and postmetaphysical inquiry are crucial to understanding the emergence of Italian geophilosophies of the Mediterranean as a discourse that, from a southern, marginal location, claims the right to self-determination, cultural agency, and epistemological autonomy. To properly situate this discourse, one must account for the broader political, social, and cultural realities affecting Europe during the last decades of the twentieth century. With the accords of the Schengen Agreement of 1985, the Maastricht Treaty of 1992, and the Amsterdam Treaty of 1997, Europe embarked in political and economic unification, as well as the dismantling of internal borders, to pursue the supranational political vision and liberal capitalist agenda we already discussed in Chapter 1. Concomitantly, stricter legal boundaries were enforced to contain the flows of people who, especially from Africa and Asia, were crossing the Mediterranean to seek a better life. The presence of non-European, non-Western migrants, also known as extracommunitarians, gave rise to discourses about a mythical European identity whose integrity was threatened by this phenomenon. Soon many thinkers began to reflect on the meanings of European heritage, cultural legacy, and identity as well as on the implications of a Europe that was rapidly becoming a "fortress." In this sense, 1991 is an emblematic year since, as Italian philosopher Caterina Resta recently remarked, it was when Deleuze and Guattari published *What Is Philosophy?* (Bonesio and Resta 9). The volume, primarily devoted to the presentation of Deleuze's and Guattari's nomadic, deterritorializing inquiries, contains an important chapter on the relationship between thought, territory, the Mediterranean, and Europeanization, called "Geophilosophy" (85–113).

Following Georg W. F. Hegel, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Martin Heidegger, Deleuze and Guattari locate the birth of modern philosophy in a specific milieu: the ancient cities of Mediterranean Greece. They narrate how foreigners and émigrés arrived to the Greek isles from the "borders of the Orient" (87). These migrants benefited greatly from their proximity to the eastern empires, though they did not follow their models. Instead,

they created societies and cultures that, even though independent and distinct, communicated with one another through unprecedented "freedom and mobility" (ibid. 87). Among the migrants were artisans and merchants but also philosophers who found a space conducive to develop thought that was based on "immanence, friendship, and opinion" (ibid. 88). In Deleuze and Guattari's words, "philosophy appears in Greece as a result of contingency rather than necessity, as a result of an ambiance or milieu rather than an origin, of a becoming, rather than a history, of a geography, rather than a historiography" (97). In time, this thought produced hermeneutic "concepts"—philosophical elements that are "not paradigmatic but *syntagmatic*; not projective but *connective*; not hierarchical but *linking;* not referential but *consistent*" (ibid. 91). Through these "concepts," Greek philosophy engendered a particular form of inquiry that "wrests history from the cult of necessity in order to stress the irreducibility of contingency [. . .] It wrests it from structures in order to trace the lines of flight that pass through the Greek world across the Mediterranean. Finally, it wrests history from itself in order to discover becomings that do not belong to history even if they fall back into it" (ibid. 96).

Deleuze and Guattari observe that while modern philosophy, especially in the German tradition, has often looked back to Greece "as a form of its own past" (101), such genealogy remains "intrinsically sullied by an abject reterritorialization" (109). Heidegger testifies to this (ibid. 108–109), but so does contemporary European thought. Alluding to the fermentation of myths about European cultural identity and economic well-being threatened by the flows of underprivileged migrants, Deleuze and Guattari observe that Europeanization is not creating a model for "a new earth and people" (108). On the contrary, it represents the history of the majority and the hegemony of capitalism and, therefore, prevents the "becoming" of minorities and "subjected peoples" (ibid. 108). For this reason, the French philosophers voice the need for a new European thought. Modeled on the "features of immanence, friendship, and opinion" (ibid. 88) developed by ancient Greece's migrant philosophers, this thought must inform contemporary European philosophy and lead to becoming the other of European identity—to the deterritorialization of self, class, nation, and language so that no difference exists between the European "Autochton" and "the stranger" (ibid. 110).

As we shall see, Franco Cassano questions Deleuze and Guattari's outline of a nomadic *nomos* of immanence and becoming. Yet *What Is Philosophy?* contributed to a wider circulation of geophilosophical approaches, including the rediscovery of earlier thinkers like Ernst Kapp (1808–1896) and especially Carl Schmitt (1888–1985).[3] It also posited the cultural legacy of premodern and precapitalist Greece as the site of discourses that counter Europeanization and global capitalism. As such, Deleuze and Guattari's pages remain a fundamental point of reference for all future discussions of geophilosophies of the Mediterranean.

Derrida's *The Other Heading* (orig., *L'autre cap*) was also published in 1991 and reflects on the upcoming European unification of 1992. Echoing

Deleuze and Guattari, Derrida observes that European unity and the symbolic association between the fall of the Berlin Wall and the victory of liberal parliamentary democracies and capitalism[4] are not an occasion to celebrate Europe's historical destiny and the exemplary nature of its universal values. Rather, these events should lead to probe the meaning of European culture and identity: "*What is proper to a culture*," Derrida writes, "*is to not be identical to itself*. Not to not have an identity, but not to be able to say 'me' or 'we' [. . .] There is no culture or cultural identity *without this difference with itself*" (*The Other Heading* 9–10). Derrida thus proposes a nonexclusionary vision of Europe that respects "an idea of Europe" but also "a difference of Europe" (ibid. 29). This vision rests on the notion of "heading," which is not only Europe's heading but also the heading of the other that constitutes it, "the heading being not only ours *[le nôtre]* but the other *[l'autre]*, not only that which we identify, calculate, and decide upon, *but the heading of the other*, before which we must respond, and which we must *remember*, *of which* we must *remind ourselves*" (ibid. 15). Europe is "responsible [not only] for itself" but also "for the other, and before the other," answering to "the double question of *le capital*, of capital, and of *la capitale*, of the capital" (ibid. 16). As for Deleuze and Guattari, Derrida's discussion of a nonexclusionary Europe also leads to the Mediterranean, evoked through Paul Valéry, who, in establishing the *Centre Universitaire Méditerranéen* in 1933, had pointed to the plurality of Mediterranean cultures as an example for Europe at a time when totalitarian identity-based ideas were leading to empire building, mass exterminations, and the destruction of Europe itself.[5] Derrida revives Valéry's vision and presents the Mediterranean as the *aporia* expressing the limits but also the future of Europe: "When speaking of the Mediterranean lake, what are we naming? Like all names [. . .] these designate at once a limit, a negative limit, and a chance. For perhaps responsibility consists in making of the name recalled, of the memory of the name, of the idiomatic limit, a chance, that is an opening of identity to its very future" (ibid. 35).

The conference "Géophilosophie de l'Europe," held in Strasbourg in 1992, is also significant in this sense. It brought together many of Europe's most distinguished philosophers, including Giorgio Agamben, Alain Badiou, Etienne Balibar, Jacques Derrida, Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, Edouardo Lourenço, Paul Virilio, and Bernard Waldenfels. It also resulted in the publication of *Penser l'Europe à ses frontières* (1993). As the editors Denis Guénoun and Jean-Luc Nancy argue, many contributors to the event refocused the discussion of post–Berlin Wall Europe on its Greek heritage. Testifying to the impact of earlier reflections by Deleuze and Guattari, as well as Derrida, the contributors emphasized the transnational legacy bequeathed by Greece to Europe, a philosophical legacy that, born in the federation of cities, transcended national boundaries in its openness to the other. In the editors' words, "it is therefore philosophy that establishes the identity of Europe [. . .] But [. . .] the invention of philosophy is not contained in the nation that gave it birth; from the very beginning, it manifests itself as detachment from the national, as openness to alterity" (Guénoun and Nancy 6). In Italy, the

reorientation of thought exemplified by these reflections was uniquely articulated in the work of Massimo Cacciari and Franco Cassano, who thus became indispensable interlocutors in Europe's geophilosophical debate.

Massimo Cacciari's Mediterranean as the Future of Europe's Anamnestic Return

Massimo Cacciari published *Geofilosofia dell'Europa* in 1994 and *Arcipelago* in 1997. *Geofilosofia dell'Europa* reflects broadly on a European identity perceived to be under threat: "Now more than ever, Europe seems to want to recall its own representations; now more than ever, Europe speaks of preservation, conservation, tutelage" (168).[6] For Cacciari, however, talks of preserving European identity imply a willed amnesia to Europe's constitutive difference: "Europe," he writes, "forgets its own essence. It piles up memories from all times and places, but forgets its own truth" (ibid.). Europe, in Cacciari's thought, does not provide a clear cartography of culture, language, geography, and ethnicity but exists as a paradoxical entity. In the wake of supranational integration and ever-growing global migratory flows, attempts to think of a European nation-state with borders and frontiers, and with centers of cultural heritage, have little legitimacy. Neither the Mediterranean nor the eastern and northwestern Franco-Carolingian borders bound Europe within clearly definable limits. Likewise, centers of cultural heritage, such as Athens's democracy, Rome's law, and Jerusalem's Christianity, do not constitute poles of cohesiveness. In short, Europe is but a *tópos átopos* ("place without a place") (ibid. 166), a cultural and political project destined to be forever incomplete. The idea of Europe is thus folded into that of the *Abendland*, or "twilight," the wane of the day of the West: "The twilight is the attainment; and the day of the West has reached its end. It doesn't matter how long its completion will take [. . .] What is crucial is not to dwell in cultivating its ideas and its idols, in fighting for the survivals of its rituals and its churches, in adding representation upon representation" (ibid. 167).

The wane of Europe, for Cacciari, is part and parcel of its existence as well as the occasion for its future destiny: "Twilight does not mean to uproot oneself, but re-turn to one's foundation, and there listen-obey what is Last" (ibid. 169–170). Cacciari illustrates the impossibility of the idea of Europe by retracing the genesis of its civilization in the separation of Greece from its Asiatic cultural and political roots, the other from which the Greek *unicum* sought to differentiate itself but without which it could not exist. In other words, Europe exists because of the Asiatic encounter and in a relation of "*reciprocal necessity*" (ibid. 164) with the other that is exemplified by an episode from Aeschylus's *The Persians* (472 BCE). In this play about the historical conflict between Greece and the Persian Empire, Queen Atossa dreams that her son, King Xerxes, subjugates two female horses, Asia and Europa. In the description of Asia and Europe as sisters who are equal yet distinct, inasmuch as they respond differently to their subjugation by the king, Cacciari locates a European uniqueness that is inseparable from its difference: "Precisely by

asserting my difference from the other, my uniqueness, I am with him—or rather, I *root myself*, and by *rooting myself* I am necessarily opposed to what, in turn, roots itself in front of me [*stásis*]; and in this con-frontation, in this contestation, I recognize myself *with* him. The other becomes my inseparable *Cum*" (ibid. 25). From here, Cacciari develops a meditation on difference and contradiction, or the "relationship-contrast" (ibid. 63), between *polemos* and *stasis*, war and peace, and land and sea, which was constitutive of Greek philosophy. Particularly interesting to our purpose is the geosymbolic discussion of sea and land of the Greek *nomos*, a discussion variously addressed by Hegel, Nietzsche, and Schmitt in *Land und Meer*.[7] In this Greek *nomos*, the land limited the expansionist reach made possible by the sea and therefore contained the potential *hubris* of thalassocracies. The spirit of discovery freed by sea navigation was thus tempered by the land, which prevented it from degrading into an unlimited will to power and conquest. This *nomos*, Cacciari reminds us, is amply corroborated by the early history of Greek colonization, which was limited to establishing cities along shorelines rather than making claims over vaster internal lands and territories (ibid. 29–48).

Following Schmitt, Cacciari notes that this geosymbolic *nomos* was abandoned in Elizabethan England (though it is already evoked in the demise of Dante's Ulysses and in the allusion to the empire of Charles V in Canto XV of Ludovico Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*). This led to the lack of limits that characterized the spatial revolution of modernity, when the spirit of discovery afforded by the open ocean turned into unbridled conquest. In late modernity's *translatio imperii*, the primacy of the sea has passed from England to the American continent, bringing the process of unlimited expansion to full completion: "The conquest of the truly boundless *aequor* of air [. . .] and the power that encompasses and appropriates air is 'understandably' the hegemonic power of the last century" (ibid. 68–69). It is therefore essential for Europe to recover earlier forms of Greek thought in a process of anamnesis of its Mediterranean past. This process, which greatly resembles the ideas of Greece and the Mediterranean articulated by Deleuze, Guattari, and Derrida, can contain the unbridled expansionism of late capitalist modernization while founding the political/ethical project of a polycentric, multicultural Europe built on the complementariness of other to self and self to other, as long as Europe is willing to accept its condition of "twilight" (ibid. 168). In Cacciari's articulation, only by welcoming the twilight of the West can Europe be open to the *Adveniens* ("that which is to come") (ibid. 168)—to the *occasus* ("twilight") (ibid. 169) of its future destiny—because "that is not an ending, but the past's centrepiece of thought that opens up to the Beginning; that is, the *Adveniens*, God as the Last. Only twilighters have a 'future'" (ibid. 167). Such *Adveniens* might lead to an economy of sustainable growth and politics of intelligent integration based on models of hospitality and citizenship founded no longer on ethnic, religious, or cultural belongings but on a relativity of values. This relativity is not relativism but rather the peaceful confrontation of one's values with those of others to reassess them and,

in the process, create new ones in the "supranational, stratified, polycentric, multicultural structure" (ibid. 10) of a future Europe.

In *Arcipelago* (1997), the work that follows *Geofilosofia dell'Europa*, Cacciari uses the geophilosophical figure of the Greek *archi-pélagos* (16) to further explore the "multicultural structure" he envisions for Europe. The geographic entity created by the Mediterranean Sea becomes a metaphor for "the space of relationship, dialogue and confrontation among the many islands that inhabit it; all made distinct by the Sea but all connected by it; all nourished by the Sea but also threatened by it" (ibid.). In this space of separation and connection, of distinction and relation, of "*diá-logos*" and "*pólemos*" (ibid. 21), all islands maintain their individuality but remain interdependent, without one being able to structure the archipelago into a single, uniform space. As such, the archipelago embodies the future form of a decentered European unit. In Cacciari's words, "in the mobile and changing space of coordination and cohabitation [. . .] the Archipelago's singularities belong to one another because none has its own Centre, since the Centre is in reality the impetus that compels each to 'transcend' itself by navigating towards another, and all of them towards the absent Fatherland" (ibid. 20–21). Like Deleuze and Guattari, Cacciari acknowledges Europe's recurrent nostalgia for a center and a redefinition of space according to a hierarchical unity. He notes, however, that if Europe succumbs to these lures, it will cease to exist—"the end [. . .] of Europe's journey, of its *ex-periri*, of its experience" (ibid. 22).

In *Arcipelago*, we also find an internalization of difference that extends not just to the singularities of the islands but also to those who inhabit them— "the internal archipelago" or archipelago within. The Greek King Oedipus, who forgot that human beings contain the many, symbolizes the latter: "Oedipus had even forgotten the meaning of the enigma he had solved: that mankind is many; that mankind hosts innumerable doubles: father-son, son-husband, daughter-sister, brother-son, and so on until that which in one way or the other embraces them all: friend-foe [. . .] Our *socius* par excellence, ourselves, is *alter*, the other who surprises or seduces or captures or lacerates us—but with whom we irrevocably co-habit" (ibid. 32). For Cacciari, this symbolic internalization of the Mediterranean archipelago must shape future relationships between European natives and foreigners so that the other will cease to be the *inimicus* and become the *hospes* of the *hostis* (ibid. 33), the guest who is also the host: "In the *hospes* always lives the *hostis*, and in the *hostis*, the *hospes*" (ibid.).

Franco Cassano's Mediterranean as Europe's Postcolonial and Subaltern Other

In *Geofilosofia dell'Europa* and *Arcipelago*, the Mediterranean is posited as the matrix, the genetic makeup of Europe and the goal of its anamnestic return, of *catabasis* as a prelude to *anabasis*. In Cassano's reflection, the Mediterranean acquires a more oppositional value. Arguably Italy's most influential

thinker on the Mediterranean, Cassano has developed his geophilosophical reflection in *Il pensiero meridiano* (1996) and a number of other works.[8] Cassano's reflection bears a number of similarities to Cacciari's *Geofilosofia dell'Europa*, though they differ with regard to the relationship between Europe and the Mediterranean. At the risk of oversimplifying a very nuanced and ever-evolving dialogue between these two thinkers,[9] Cassano conceives of modern Europe as an Atlantic fiefdom rather than a late declination of the Greek heritage toward which Europe must return to ensure its future, as claimed by Cacciari, Deleuze and Guattari, and, to some extent, Derrida. In Cassano's words, "to see all of Europe [. . .] fully developed in Ancient Greece is to have forgotten that the will to power never was [Greece's] gravitational centre [. . .] no Greek ever focused his existence on the future and on development [. . .] Europe, instead, becomes a world power when its gravitational center shifts from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic" (*Southern Thought and Other Essays* 110). Moreover, from the frame of inquiry of postcolonial and subaltern studies, the relationship between Europe and the Mediterranean, including Italy, is based on Orientalizing premises. Europe constructs its south as an exotic, sensual paradise but also an imperfect, incomplete project of modernity as well as a frontier separating the Islamic from a Christian world whose center is northern and protestant: "The Mediterranean [. . .] means backwardness and resistance to modernization; amoral clannishness and nepotism; Mafia and systemic unlawfulness [. . .] a swamp filled with conflicts, terrorists, superstitions and fundamentalisms: it is anti-modernity, the hereditary defect [. . .] never touched by the Protestant reform, the true cure-all that opens every door to modernity [. . .] The Mediterranean['s] [. . .] only acceptable meaning is the one mediated by tourism: wonderful landscapes [and] vacation beaches where the disciplined forces of the industrial *polis* escape to enjoy their moments of freedom and of sun, and rediscover nature and their bodies" (ibid. 132–133).

From these premises, Cassano's reflection on the South develops toward a reversal of the North-South relationship: not the South in light of modernity but modernity in light of the South. The South is no longer a belated and imperfect not-yet North but rather the space from which one can deconstruct Atlanticist Europe (and the Western empire of which it is the periphery) while bringing forth a set of alternative values: "Thinking the South thus means that the South is the subject of thought: It does not have to be studied, analyzed and judged by an external thought, but it must [. . .] think of itself on its own terms [. . .] Southern thought basically means this: Give back to the South its ancient dignity as the subject of thought; interrupt the long sequence whereby it has been thought by others" (ibid. 1–2). For Cassano, the northern capitalist belief that growth and economic development could be spread to all corners of the world finds, in the imperfect modernization of the South, the devastation of its urban and natural landscapes, and the malfunctioning of its institutions and deteriorating civic consciousness, its very essence (ibid. 5). Precisely because modernization coincides with an imperfect project, Cassano engages in a series

of reflections that, from a southern location, challenge the myths of progress and rationality of Western modernity and the episteme that sustains them. Aligning himself with the critics of global modernity,[10] he explores the human consequences caused by the regime of temporal acceleration initiated by classical capitalist modernity and argues that in post-Fordist economies, this regime has led to a radical individualism of experience that manifests itself in unlimited consumerism and unrestrained competition as well as the perception of human sociality as an intolerable boundary.[11] Communities have been replaced by conglomerates of isolated monads, unable to pause and engage in reflection, conviviality, and care for the other: "The locus of *cum-vivere* loses the *cum* and becomes a nonspace traversed by solitary atoms" (ibid. xli). Furthermore, in a society dominated by the regime of temporal acceleration, even democracy, as a political sociality based on discussion and dialogue, is compromised. Cassano acknowledges that some individuals flourish in endless acceleration and in having been transformed into "*homo currens*."[12] Many others do not. In the name of scientific, technological, and economic progress, the global reach of modernity is leading to the resurgence of forms of neocolonialism. Sharply distinguishing his argument from Hardt and Negri's, for whom in the postmodern age of the "empire" the shift toward immaterial labor and supranational organizations relegates colonialism to the industrial past of the European nation-states,[13] Cassano charts the neocolonial formations of post-Fordism in the exploitation of human beings and their labor, the despoliation and destruction of nature, and the integration of the rich diversity of human cultures into a Western hegemony. Such standardization of experiences within the law of a single market, within the boundaries of a world system based on the opposition between center and periphery, leads not to a "triumph *of* humanity" but to a "triumph *over* humanity" (Latouche, *Westernization* 24). Indeed, like Zygmunt Bauman and Richard Sennett, Cassano observes that the emancipation promised by a global economy benefits a tiny minority while millions are transformed into human waste and wasted human lives.[14]

In addition to critiquing the enduring human consequences of Western modernity on historical and socioeconomic grounds, Cassano investigates the episteme that makes the "coloniality of power"[15] possible so as to "decolonize the mind"[16] and "provincialize European thought"[17] by probing the foundations of an epistemology whose enabling, universalizing fictions legitimated, and continue to legitimate, a model of planetary dominance over human labor and natural resources. Among such foundations, Cassano locates idealist philosophies of history, such as Hegel's, whose ethnocentric and teleological perspectives combine with the experience of difference as a limit to be overcome through incorporation of the other in one's (Western) self. In revisiting *Lectures on the Philosophy of History* (1837), Cassano acknowledges that in Hegel's work, the Mediterranean exists "as the axis of world history, where Greece, 'the shining beacon,' lies" (*Southern Thought and Other Essays* 71). However, Hegel's idealism ultimately conceives the Mediterranean as a stage to be surpassed in a historical movement toward the North of Europe:

"Without any hesitation, Hegel states: 'Europe is absolutely the end of history, just as Asia is the beginning' [. . .] All of history must proceed North, towards the West, to finally flow into the highest spiritual density concentrated in the ethical power of the State" (ibid. 72).[18]

Besides questioning a vision of historical progress as a path toward the North as *Abend-land*, the land of the evening and of presumed maturity, Cassano examines the geophilosophy of Occidentalism to better foreground its untenable claims to universality. He argues that central to Occidentalism and its quest for dominance are two fundamentalisms: the fundamentalism of the land and that of the sea. The fundamentalism of land is rooted in totalitarian forms of belonging, such as ethnicity, culture, language, and especially place—that is, in an understanding of the land as that which "chains men and women, immures them with their belongings, shreds their individualization, and prevents them from taking the road to the sea, from leaving, from encountering other worlds" ("Southern Thought" 4). The fear of mobility and of encountering the other that the fundamentalism of land implies is not resolved by replacing it with the fundamentalism of the sea. Indeed, the unstoppable liquidity of the ocean, "where people live their own eradication, having deserted an anchor, a mooring, a refuge, a home" (ibid. 4), leads toward utilitarian individualism—toward aberrant forms of freedom that do not know the restraint of limits and the importance of returns. This is when *Moby Dick's* Captain Ahab replaces the Greek Ulysses, a *homo viator* whose travels, limited to the Mediterranean by the Pillars of Hercules, always implied a return: the journey as *nóstos.*[19] More damagingly, the West's lack of restraints on the fundamentalism of the ocean has led to humanity's darkest hours: the colonization of the Americas, the Caribbean, Africa, the Middle East, and Asia as well as the neocolonial formations of the present era, where the same tradition of Eurocentric Occidentalism legitimizes the post–Cold War new world order, of which the war in Kosovo and the American response to September 11 are but the latest expressions:[20]

> The first gesture of Columbus, after he lands in the "Indies" and kisses the ground, is to baptize the island he has just touched, foisting on it the name of San Salvador. The metaphor of discovery removes the Other from the stage, along with its gods, names and rights [. . .] What was colonialism if not the division of the planet in many provinces of Europe, the contempt for and domination of the other? [. . .] But Western fundamentalism did not end with colonialism. Far from dying out, it has begun to write another page of its long story with the passage of planetary primacy from old Europe to young America. Obviously it had to be another form of fundamentalism, one that was compatible with the demise of colonialism. (*Southern Thought and Other Essays* 143–145)

As devastating as Occidentalism are the reactions it elicits. Borrowing categories developed by Arthur Toynbee in *A Study of History* (1947), Cassano contends that Occidentalism leads to two equally destructive forms of

opposition: Herodianism and Zealotism. While the Herodians undergo a process of deculturation that leads them to embrace the West as a model, the Zealots embark in reactionary searches for identity to maintain their integrity as a subaltern culture. For Cassano, the rise of Islamic fundamentalism is akin to a response by the Zealots, even though, in the 1960s, countries such as Algeria, Egypt, Iran, and Syria had chosen, like the Herodians, a Western path toward modernization. When this path failed, many turned to Zealotism, in a reversal that demonstrates how fundamentalism is often the effect of the disastrous laceration brought about by modernization: "*We can say, then, that fundamentalism is not the expression of the essence of Islamic culture but is the option that prevails after the defeat of nationalism.* Its prevalence is not the expression of a culture suspicious of modernity, but the *effect of the relationship*, of the deeply asymmetrical nature of the relationship between the West and those nations, and of the refusal to pursue avenues that have ended in failure" (ibid. 146).

Cassano's Mediterranean as an Archive of Redeemable Values

Despite such devastating assessments, Cassano does not abdicate sociopolitical and cultural agency but articulates a discourse on the Mediterranean and on the global Souths as subaltern archives of values and traditions: "The image of the Mediterranean thus is turned upside down: It no longer is something that has preceded the modern and development, as its degraded periphery; instead, it becomes a deformed identity that must be rediscovered and reinvented through its links with the present: no longer an obstacle, but a resource" (ibid. 137). These values range from slowness, contemplation, and conviviality to reflections on the Mediterranean heritage of exchange, hybridization, and plurality.

These values have kept the South from reaching the peaks of North Atlantic modernity but have also screened it from many of its pathologies. In a praise of slowness that parallels those proffered by the writer Milan Kundera, the filmmakers Werner Herzog and Wim Wenders, and cultural theorists A. O. Hirschman and Paul Virilio, Cassano conceives of these values as examples of resistance to the excesses of capitalist and especially post-Fordist modernization. Next to them, he also recovers the Mediterranean heritage of exchange between cultures, societies, and ethnicities: "In a land where many others have arrived, there is no monolithic and pure 'we' to defend from the snare of the Other [. . .] Contaminations, arrivals and departures [. . .] turn the many people of the Mediterranean [. . .] into incurable mongrels, into the antithesis of any purity, integrity, and fundamentalism: Our 'we' is full of Others" (ibid. xlvii). This other has been at times a friend and at times a foe, but regardless of the outcome, the Mediterranean remains a place where no single culture or tradition has ever successfully imposed a unified vision; continents, religions, societies, and ethnicities have met without one prevailing permanently over the others. As a result, Mediterranean

thought has developed a profound consciousness of the *limen*, the border that divides but, in dividing, also unites: "*Frontiers, confines, limits, edges,* [and] *margins* are also the set of points one *shares*. We have the same borders with another country because the line of separation is also the tract we have in common with it, the location where our points come into contact with each other" (ibid. 43). Precisely because the *limen* is inherently porous, the Mediterranean is a *pluriversum* irreducible to the *universum*, a geography of many voices and forms of knowledge to counter the totalizing assumptions of the West, including those of a Europe that has become the periphery of the Atlanticist empire: "Mediterranean today means putting the border, that line of division and contact between people and civilizations, center stage [. . .] We do not go to the Mediterranean to seek the fullness of our origins but to experience our contingency. The Mediterranean shows us the limits of Europe and of the West [. . .] On the Mediterranean, the old continent redeems itself of its Eurocentrism" (ibid. xlvi–xlvii).

We should point out that Cassano's notion of the Mediterranean as a place of exchange and connections—of a "we" that is full of others—does not imply a facile endorsement of the historical hybridization of the basin. By hybridization, Cassano intends the intercultural spaces theorized by Arjun Appadurai, Kwame Anthony Appiah, Homi Bhabba, Franz Fanon, Néstor García-Canclini, Paul Gilroy, Edouard Glissant, and Françoise Lionnet, among others—spaces that dilute identities but do not obscure the conflict-ridden aspects of interconnectedness among individuals, societies, and cultures: "The hybridization of cultures and people weakens all claims of exclusivity, purity, and integrity, as the Mediterranean knows well [. . .] But hybridization alone is not enough, because it tells us nothing about the power relations between cultures. Ethnic rape is contamination, but, above all, it is violence, a ferocious asymmetry of power, an affront to women and to the freedom of the other" (ibid. 147).

Cassano's Greek *Nomos*

Cassano recovers Mediterranean traditions of slowness, contemplation, and conviviality as well as a heritage of Creolization, contamination, and crossovers between north and south, east and west. He also dwells at length on the Mediterranean *nomos* of land and sea and the values that emerge from its presence as a closed sea. Revisiting, like Cacciari before him, Carl Schmitt's articulation of the opposition between a thought of an open sea and one of a sea bound by land, Cassano presents the ocean as the space of an empire that, having embraced the unlimited expanse of water, comes to depend on unbounded technology and technological warfare: "The fundamentalism of the sea [. . .] pushes toward nihilism and the uncontrollable unleashing of technology. When the sea is transformed into an ocean [. . .] it becomes a place without shores, an absence of land that spills into an integral dependency on technology. Indeed, only technology can offer (artificial) forms of stability and protection in a world that, founding itself on the perennial

mobility of the sea, is fully deterritorialized and has renounced every home and root" (ibid. 17). In this *nomos* of the ocean, a sense of location is lost. Individuals are transformed into Faustian-like figures, prey to a delirium of omnipotence. Untied from community and no longer part of the totality of the earth, they are moved by an infinite drive to dominate that expresses itself in a limitless technological arsenal needed to achieve total mastery of the world.

If the "overflowing of the sea" leads to universal uprooting and an unbridled spirit of conquest, equally problematic is a land-based thought, since it displaces the aberrations of boundless fluidity in a telluric, earthly dimension. In the Mediterranean, limits and boundaries are always present. In the fractal geography of the Aegean, land borders (and thus limits) water, containing the liquid expanse of the sea. This geography was internalized by ancient Greek culture, allowing it to avoid the fundamentalism of land and sea that Cassano views as the central aspect of the quest for dominance of Occidentalism: "The Aegean Sea and the Mediterranean [. . .] are a strong discontinuity between lands, but not their relinquishment without bearings. This distance that, especially for the ancient sailor, could be great and fearsome, is not, however, an abyss and the sea does not drown into the ocean [. . .] The Pillars of Hercules fix in the Greek imaginary the jump between the sea bound by lands and the endless extension of the ocean" (ibid. 18). Precisely because it internalized the idea of the border between land and sea, the Greek cultural imaginary developed the awareness of the ineluctable existence of difference—a difference that could, and did, alternatively lead to exchanges and coexistence as well as to confrontations and conflict but that ultimately evaded fixed attributes of language, culture, and ethnicity and the unbridled, limitless liquidity of the oceanic expanse: "This sea, which is at once external and internal, inhabited and waded into, this sea-as-border interrupts the rule of identity, forces one to accommodate division. Here land, with its obsession for fixity, assuredness, and appropriation, clashes always against a boundary" (ibid. 18).

Greek polytheism, tragedy, and philosophy exemplify, for Cassano, the most significant achievements of a cultural imaginary born of geography, as each allows for the legitimacy of many points of view. In the polytheism of Greek religion, for example, Dionysus implied Apollo: the many gods existed as competing particularities, engaging in conflict and interaction but never claiming universality. Tragedy expressed the irresolvable *agon* between dramatic characters, as occurs in Sophocles's *Antigone* between the discordant truths of Antigones and Creon or in Aeschylus's *Prometheus Bound*, where the Titan is both right and wrong. Philosophy developed the *dissoì lògoi*, the practice of arguing both sides of an issue in the *agorà*, which foregrounds the discursive frailty of wanting to own the ultimate truth that is exemplified in the speech between the Melians and the Athenians, from Thucydides's *History of the Peloponnesian War*. In this work, the objectivity of the historian, Cassano notes, "is an example of the tragic diverging of perspectives whose gap the *logos* cannot bridge" (ibid. 21). By internalizing the physical

borders of its geography, Greek thought realized that limits should not be trespassed, as suggested by the myth of the Pillars of Hercules or the figure of the Homeric Ulysses, the traveler who must return home. When trespassing did occur, Greek thought envisioned the greatest of crimes, the *hubris* that led to destruction through one's *nemesis*.

Throughout his recovery of the Greek cultural imaginary, Cassano often reflects on the misuse of this legacy *if* and *when* its components could be used to reaffirm a universalizing Occidental episteme. For example, he detects in Nietzsche's *Gay Science* a return to Greece and the South only as a step toward the limitless, boundless expanse of the ocean, while in Heidegger he locates a reterritorialization of the ocean. Exemplified by Heidegger's *Heimkunft*— the return from the sea of *beings* to the *Being* of the Heartland—this is a "telluric regression" (ibid. 29) that is as dangerous as the ocean's expanses, since it leads to a Dionysian will to power rooted in the land: "Heidegger's, therefore, is not *the* philosophy, but the complete reterritorializing of philosophy, a metaphysical hand that tried to hold within itself all of philosophy, while wishing to elide the sea, and the relationship with tragedy and the nonbeing of truth. This is the fundamental limit of Heidegger's philosophy, its being sucked in the Heartland, far away from the corruption of any sea, of any border" (ibid. 34). Nietzsche and Heidegger embrace, respectively, the fundamentalism of the sea and the land. In so doing, they misunderstand the more enduring meaning of the Greek heritage. But Cassano extends his critique to other philosophers in the post-Nietzschean tradition. These include Deleuze and Guattari, whose philosophy of radical immanence and deterritorialization is unable to recover the tension and contradiction (i.e., the dialectic) that, to him, constitute the specificity of the geophilosophical knowledge born in Greece. For this reason, Cassano endorses writers such as Pier Paolo Pasolini and Albert Camus while remaining reticent to recognize in the Italian Heideggerean philosophers, a group of thinkers who comprise Caterina Resta among others,[21] fellow participants in the southern discourse that he articulates.

Cassano and Fellow Southern Thinkers: Albert Camus and Pier Paolo Pasolini

The work of Caterina Resta, who directs the "Collana di Geofilosofia" for the publisher Diabasis and is the author of "10 tesi di Geofilosofia" and several other reflections on Europe and the Mediterranean, contains numerous parallels to Cassano's.[22] Resta, however, arrives to the Mediterranean from a rereading of Heidegger's *Heimkunft* and *Ortung*, which led to the publication of *Il luogo e le vie* (1996) and *La terra del mattino* (1998). From then, her reflection has developed into two related directions: a meditation on how humans, after a planetary uprooting, or *Entortung*, can find new ways to inhabit the earth and relate to the environment; and reflections on questions of identity, difference, borders, and hospitality that owe much to Emmanuel Lévinas, Jean-Luc Nancy, and especially Derrida, as works such as

L'evento dell'altro (2003) and *L'estraneo* (2008) exemplify. These works led Resta's analyses even closer to Cassano's, particularly in her critique of Western modernity's technologization of the world and the need for a different relationship with the other. Nonetheless, the Heideggerean matrix of Resta's thought remains a significant point of divergence between the two thinkers.

Cassano, instead, enthusiastically endorses the reflections of Albert Camus and Pier Paolo Pasolini. In the Algerian-born writer Camus, he recognizes a dialectical thinker who not only questions the teleology of Christianity, Marxism, and the philosophies of history in post-Kantian ideology but also upholds values that are outdated in modernity, such as an archaic notion of honor. Cassano thus praises him for the "ability not to follow the flow of the river, to remain standing while everyone else reasonably takes a seat in the armchair of the present, being outdated not as a sign of affectation but of friction that accompanies another way of being of the mind" (*Southern Thought and Other Essays* 83). Camus is also important for his revisiting of Greek culture. In 1937, against a background marked by dictatorship, empire building, and racism, Camus delivered the lecture "The New Mediterranean Culture" for the inauguration of the *Maison de la Culture* in Algiers. In it, he targeted ideologies that seek to establish the superiority of one culture over another[23] and countered by positing a humanistic foundation of tolerance and respect for the other. Camus would further expand his ideas in "Prometheus in the Underworld" (1947),[24] "Helen's Exile" (1948),[25] and especially "Thought at the Meridian," the last section of the politicophilosophical essay *The Rebel* (1951). Written after two worldwide conflicts, "Thought at the Meridian" outlines Camus's idea of recovering the Mediterranean heritage's repressed values (to correct the excesses of German ideology): balance and equilibrium between extremes, the awareness of limits and boundaries, the primacy of values internal to all humanity that did not originate from an ideological system exterior to it, a tolerant outlook rooted in the commonality of humanity, a respect for nature, and an affirmation of the present against the promise of a distant, teleological future.

Pasolini, like Camus, offers Cassano the opportunity to meditate on difference to engage the decentering of Western thought. Using the author/filmmaker's life and writings as a point of departure, Cassano discusses how his sexual diversity acted as a catalyst to question the centrality of certain Western imperatives, but he also accounts for Pasolini's evolving thoughts on politics, fatherhood, and the sacred to chart an existence lived always under the sign of the oxymoron—that is, in a dialectic that has no resolution. "For Pasolini, to remain in the oxymoron means much more than to be tied to his diversity [. . .] It means instead to exalt and superimpose the many forms of antithesis and contradiction, to look for and be open to those forms with feverish and inexhaustible eagerness, to live a life far from those that found a home in it and judge the world from that vintage point, even when this home is the uncomfortable and painful one of 'diversity'" (ibid. 91). Pasolini becomes an emblem of the contradiction necessary to make relative the claims of the final, absolute word. In this sense, Pasolini emerges as a fully "southern"

writer and, like Camus, the bearer of a critical, oppositional thought necessary to counter the hegemonic epistemologies and normative paradigms of Atlanticist Europe.

AROUND CACCIARI AND CASSANO:
FRANCESCA SAFFIOTI, PIETRO BARCELLONA, MARIO ALCARO, AND OTHERS

Cacciari's and Cassano's works represent the most significant articulations of Italian geophilosophical reflections on the Mediterranean. Other authors have followed in their path, including Francesca Saffioti and collaborators to the volume *Mediterraneo e cultura europea*. Saffioti's *Geofilosofia del mare* (2007) is not an original geophilosophical articulation of Europe and the Mediterranean as much as a synthesis of philosophical discussions surrounding two meanings of the sea: the Mediterranean as limit, difference, and measure; and the ocean as a space that, knowing no mediation, has given rise to an unbridled spirit of conquest from early modernity up to contemporary globalization. This different relationship with the sea implies opposite modes of relating to the earth. Whereas the Mediterranean *nomos* maintains an understanding of space as place, a milieu that binds the individual with loci of culture, history, community, and traditions, the oceanic *nomos* transforms the earth into an expanse of conquest, a globe to be endlessly exploited by an uprooted, deterritorialized, and masterful individual: "Space is transformed from that which defines the fundamental dimension of humankind's being— its being finite—into what, on the contrary, is the object of an infinite human activity [. . .] The absolute novelty of modernity is the institution of a Subject that becomes the 'measure and dominion of being in its entirety.' Thus representation ties itself to a 'will to power' understood as the freedom to conquer and prey over an empty space" (Saffioti, *Geofilosofia* 42). Saffioti proposes the Mediterranean *nomos* to temper the excesses of the modern episteme and to find alternative relationships to inhabit the space of globalization, which she articulates in ways that hark back to Cacciari's notion of archipelago in the subchapter "La misura dell'arcipelago" (ibid. 183–195), even though she is especially indebted to Cassano's idea of the Mediterranean (ibid. 130–143).[26]

The volume *Mediterraneo e cultura europea* is the outcome of the conference "Il Mediterraneo nella filosofia e nella cultura europea," organized by the "Centro per la Filosofia Italiana" in 2002. Here, the focus on the Mediterranean emerges from a larger discourse on "il Progetto-Europa" that renders necessary an "exchange of views between Mediterranean civilizations and continental cultures" (Alcaro et al. 5). The volume's contributors situate their discourse in locations that, by and large, fall within the visions of Cacciari and Cassano, as evidenced by the contributions of Mario Alcaro, Pietro Barcellona, Giuseppe Cacciatore, and Mario Signore.[27] In the path of inquiry threaded by Cacciari, Giuseppe Cacciatore revisits the *nomos* of land and sea to emphasize the Mediterranean as Europe's cultural heritage and future

"laboratory," particularly as it pertains to the creation of democratic forms of citizenships founded on "historical individualities and the search for stable social and economic bases for a harmonious development of all constituencies and geo-political entities" (17–18). Likewise, Mario Signore argues that the Mediterranean is the site of Europe's anamnestic return: "Moving from the Mediterranean to Europe we can focus on what we were, what we are and what we will be, rendering thematically the values we need to inspire the idea of Europe" (22).

Pietro Barcellona outlines a much more oppositional view of the relationship between Europe and the Mediterranean, arguing for a Mediterranean geophilosophy that only survives in Southern Europe and therefore does not constitute a matrix for Europe to recover or rediscover: "Greek tradition, later on, moved somehow to the *Mezzogiorno*, creating its own specificity [. . .] but only in Southern Europe" ("Mediterraneo" 40). In this sense, Barcellona's understanding of the role of the Mediterranean in post-1989 Europe introduces the broader argument he develops in his *Il suicidio dell'Europa* (2005). Here Barcellona traces the dissolution of European values from modernity to the present. This dissolution has led Europe toward "the technologization of life, the loss of substance of both 'world' and reality," and in the arms of "the grand narrative that tends to legitimize 'the new order': the strategy of globalization" (Barcellona, *Il suicidio* 14). Herein resides the end of Europe, an end that does not carry the promise of rebirth contained in Cacciari's notion of "twilight" as *Adveniens* but devolves in the idea captured by the title and subtitle of Barcellona's book, which translate to *Europe's Suicide: From Unhappy Consciousness to Cognitive Hedonism*. This self-inflicted death follows the loss of the Greek paradigm of mediation expressed by way of "oppositional couplings that bestowed meaning upon the 'figures' and the 'horizons' of the age that began with the extraordinary creations of the Mediterranean world" (ibid. 10). Whereas early modernity still retained the Greek sense of dualisms and oppositions manifested in the crisis of the subject—in the "unhappy consciousness" that is born from the awareness of the paradoxes and limits of the world and of experience—modernity and late modernity have overcome this crisis by embracing the cognitive hedonism of a post- or transhuman subjectivity (ibid. 54). Articulated through a reflection on Roberto Marchesini's *Post-human. Verso nuovi modelli di esistenza*, this is a self-referential subjectivity that is no longer contained by the limits and oppositions that prevent totalizing projects but is fully engaged in their transcendence through prosthetic expansions and metamorphoses provided by technology. For Barcellona, the passage from unhappy consciousness to cognitive hedonism is not a cure, because in the crisis, in the disease, lies the true "healthy status of the West" that was part of Mediterranean Greek thought (ibid. 70).

Mario Alcaro shares Barcellona's oppositional view of the relationship between Europe and the Mediterranean. His contribution merits an attentive discussion as it pertains not just to the essay contained in *Mediterraneo e cultura europea* but to the broader studies *Sull'identità meridionale*

and *Filosofie della natura. Naturalismo mediterraneo e pensiero moderno as well. Sull'identità meridionale,* whose preface by Piero Bevilacqua, one of the distinguished voices of *neomeridionalismo*, explicitly ties the work of *Meridiana* and *IMES* to that of Cassano and Alcaro,[28] making a case for the oppositional value of Mediterranean cultural traits. Thus gift giving, including hospitality, becomes a means to strengthen social relations while weakening a mercantile, capitalist exchange of goods; structures of kinship and friendship are seen as antidotes to modern individualism and solipsism; a maternal culture of forgiveness counters a patriarchal spirit of belligerence, competition, and retribution; the cult of the saints opposes indifference to the plight of others through empathic participation; and funereal rites resist the erasure of death (and thus of memory and history) in modernity. Alcaro's second study, *Filosofie della natura*, is more complex than *Sull'identità meridionale*. From the premise that Mediterranean geography and geomorphology engender specific forms of historical and cultural thought, Alcaro revisits what he conceives as common Mediterranean geosymbolic forms: a naturalism that rests on a pantheistic vision of nature, and the sacredness and creative vitality of the cosmos. With the mechanistic turn of Cartesian rationality and the hegemony of an anthropocentric gaze, naturalism was lost in Occidental modernity. Whereas in Greek thought *lògos epistemikòs*, God of geometry and rationality, was limited by *phrònesis*, the Goddess of prudence and measure, by the early modern era, Western rationalism increasingly viewed nature as an inanimate mass, devoid of vitality. As a result, physical spaces have lost the sacredness and mystery that enabled the respect of place, or *amor loci*, and have been viewed through a technoscientific paradigm whose grounds are "mechanism and the ousting of the world of life from a cosmic context, now studied only according to the paradigms of mathematical physics and geometry [. . .] the divesting, in the scientific explanation of natural processes, of the problems inherent to the 'ends of nature' and every form of finality" (Alcaro, *Filosofie* 16).

For Alcaro, the Mediterranean provides an alternative set of values through material and symbolic "archeological sites" ("Le culture" 125), which he recovers by revisiting the philosophy of nature from Greek and Hellenistic thought up to Mediterranean humanism and renaissance. In the philosophy of naturalism that he outlines, the human being occupies a specific place within an entire cosmos; therefore, claims of man as subject find limits and measures. Greek thought plays a fundamental role in this vision, and Alcaro discusses at length Thales of Miletus's conception of nature as an organism, Plato's cosmology, Aristotle's reflections on the soul and on nature, and the Stoics' and Epicureans' vision of the natural world. But Alcaro extends his reflection beyond the Greeks and finds, in the medieval notion of *ens creatum* ("created entity"), that man belongs to an order that he could neither control nor regulate, which limited his will to power and mastery. He also explores the concept of *anima mundi* ("soul of the world") and the dynamic and creative aspects of nature, or *physis*, as well as the distinction between *natura naturata* ("acted nature") and *natura naturans* ("acting nature").

Alcaro then devotes some thought to Saint Augustine and Saint Thomas before moving to the epigones of Mediterranean naturalism—namely, southern Italy's renaissance philosophers Bernardino Telesio, Giordano Bruno, and Tommaso Campanella, for whom the universe possessed a sacred and enigmatic aura.

Alcaro clarifies that his reflections are not an expression of hylozoist thought and do not dismiss the knowledge that modern science accumulated from early modernity onward but rather are a means of relating to nature in a more responsible way. In this sense, his work reflects concerns shared by Caterina Resta and Francesca Saffioti and bears affinities with contemporary ecological theorizations of nature, such as those of the Italian *movimento ambientalista* ("environmentalist movement"), which, from the premise that growth is unsustainable, reevaluate the teleology of progress and development by focusing on alternative ways of inhabiting the earth. Nevertheless, Alcaro's work disregards northern thinkers, such as George Louis Leclerc de Buffon, Denis Diderot, and Gottfried Wilhelm Leibnitz, who also developed perspectives that are critical of a majoritarian Occidental episteme. Alcaro also does not account for examples of Mediterranean writings, such as the biblical texts, where an anthropocentric vision represents the human being as subjected only to the will of God. Otherwise stated, in the work of Alcaro, as well as other thinkers of Mediterranean geophilosophical difference and exceptionalism, one detects a problematic evolution toward a territorializing identity politics whereby regional, subnational European belonging assumes a position of primacy. From here, it unfolds into forms of universalizing essentialism: the Mediterranean South, once reified by the North, now reifies it in turn.

Southern Thought within and beyond the Lures of Essentialism

Cassano is also not immune from the lure of essentialism. In several passages of *Southern Thought and Other Essays on the Mediterranean*, the notion of Mediterranean exceptionalism mythologizes premodern, precapitalist Greece as the cure for the ills of globalization. We must recall, however, that while contemporary globalization follows by and large the American model and way of life, early examples of globalized capitalism did not emerge from the New World but from the cities of the medieval and renaissance Mediterranean: Amalfi, Genoa, Florence, Venice, and so on. Atlanticism itself is the offspring of Europe, since the spatial revolution unleashed by oceanic modernity originated from England and Iberia, isles and peninsulas of the Old World. The danger of essentialism emerges more clearly in Cassano's subsequent book, *Paeninsula* (1998). There, Cassano argues that Italy's peninsular morphology explains its "vocation [. . .] to openness," expressed in ecumenism, a universalizing idea of *civitas*, a subversion of nationalism, and more (7–8). Specifically, he contends that Italy, as a peninsula stretched across the Mediterranean Sea, was always permeable to invasions, whose legacies are

reflected in its diversity of languages, cultures, and ethnicities. From these considerations, he revisits the premodern history of Italy, stressing how the creation of the Italian modern state in 1861 occurred approximately three centuries after the consolidation of European powers into absolute monarchies. The Italian delay is explained through the presence of two models of sovereignties: the local, which is the result of the political fragmentation of medieval communes and of the cities of renaissance; and the universalistic, which derives from the heritages of Rome and Catholicism. While revisiting Italy's delayed state formation, Cassano makes Italy coterminous with the Mediterranean and unfolds the *pluriversum* of the Mediterranean into the *universum* of Mediterranean Italy. From this point onward, Italy's shortcomings are refashioned as strengths. Decentralized forms of sovereignty, cosmopolitanism, and plurality become a force rather than the cause of national disintegration, and the peninsula can therefore be promoted to a central position in present-day European and Mediterranean geopolitics alike: "What if this cosmopolitism were not just a limit, what if it reflected a value that instead of being scorned should be rediscovered and strengthened, what if in this Roman Catholic heritage were reflected the geopolitical vocation of the peninsula to openness, something [. . .] that evokes [. . .] a universalistic idea of *civitas*, a critique of nationalism that comes from porous borders, from that ancient mix of stories, names, colors that the sea has deposited on the peninsula's long coastlines?" (Cassano, *Paeninsula* 8–9). What emerges is Italy as "Mediterranean Italy" or, rather, "Italy as the Mediterranean," a vision trapped within the tropes of a belated Romantic nationalism. Thankfully, in the preface to the 2005 edition of *Il pensiero meridiano*,[29] Cassano shows that he has not renounced his geophilosophical paradigm, as he carefully avoids geographic determinism: "Perhaps the world is not inhabited by a single Mediterranean, because there are many places where, for centuries, civilizations have met and hung in the balance between conflict, coexistence, and contamination [. . .] from Edouard Glissant's Antilles to the India that has spawned the research of Homi K. Bhabha and Gayatry C. Spivak. This multiplicity of loci of intersection is further grounds for a possible broadened fraternity, and it would be useful to recognize these correspondences, bringing into focus differences but also affinities" (*Southern Thought and Other Essays* xlix).[30]

The Mediterranean, thus rearticulated, allows Cassano's geophilosophy to stretch past the spatial boundaries of the Italian Peninsula and outline a greatly amplified symbolic space. The Mediterranean becomes a metaphor for the "global South(s)" and for an idea of *sud-alternità* ("South alternity")[31] that might have arisen from the geographical morphology of the Aegean (or of peninsular Italy) but inclusively encompasses other areas, cultures, and traditions: the Caribbean of Edouard Glissant; the Asia of Homi Bhabba, Dipesh Chakrabarty, Ranajit Guha, Gyan Prakash, Amartya Sen, and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak; the Latin America of Boaventura de Sousa Santos, Edgardo Lander, Walter Mignolo, and Anibal Quijano; and the northern and the sub-Saharan Africa of Chinua Achebe, Mohammed Arkoun, Nelson Mandela,

Wole Soyinka, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, and Aminata Traoré. "There is also the South of hybridity and *métissage*, the whole of the Mediterraneans of the world, which has a decisive role in shaping a path that moves away from every cultural and national fundamentalism: a South that stretches from America to India. Finally, there is the African South, a South that, despite its recent great voices [. . .] cannot avoid sinking into suffering and the inability to make itself heard" (ibid. liii). These connections between the Mediterranean and global South(s) are not meant to elide differences and asymmetries—nor to minimize the magnitude of African, American, or Asian colonization. Rather, they establish a transnational dialogue among peripheral zones that, despite their differences, share many commonalities: "Southern thought explicitly claims for itself the connection between a South, the Italian one, and the Souths of the worlds. This is done not to establish equivocal identifications and assimilations, but to oppose the tendency to think that the emancipation of the Italian South can be read as a separate question, enclosed within the boundaries of a national or continental state, and blind to its connections with the outside" (ibid. xxxvi).

Toward Practices of Cross-Cultural Translatio and Interculturality

This broad, inclusive vision has allowed the best expressions of Italian geophilosophies of the Mediterranean to unfold into valuable programs of cross-cultural *translatio* and dialogue. Cassano and Danilo Zolo's *L'alternativa mediterranea* (2007) and *Mediterraneo: Un dialogo fra due sponde* (2005), edited by Ferhat Horchani and Zolo, are exemplary of this effort. In the essay that opens *L'alternativa Mediterranea*, Zolo makes clear that the vision that informs the collection opposes the stances of thinkers such as Ulrich Beck, Ralf Dahrendorf, Anthony Giddens, and Jürgen Habermas, for whom all cultures should adhere to the universalizing and hegemonic values of Western civilization. It champions instead an authentic practice of intercultural dialogue with Arab-Islamic culture. This practice implies an intellectual disposition on the part of the West to divest itself of the stereotypes that plague its representations of the other and listen to the crucial questions that are emerging from the Islamic world. Among these, Zolo points to the relationship between Islam and modernity—the state's rule of law and individuals' rights.

The question of Islam and modernity demands sensitivity toward the *sadmat alhadaha* (Zolo 42), the trauma inflicted by colonialism on the Islamic political, economic, and social institutions. Through the lenses provided by Târiq al-Bishri, Mohammed Arkoun, and Hamadi Redissi, Zolo argues that this traumatic encounter fractured a 15-century-long Islamic cultural totality of religion, knowledge, and science. Moreover, the trauma of *sadmat alhadaha* impacted individuals, leading them to resist, but also imitate, those Western models that proved more successful in the modern world. Zolo recognizes that this laceration endures and notes that contemporary Islamic

thought does not reject modernity *tout court* through a blind obedience to tradition, the *taqlid* (43). On the contrary, it strives to find in Koranic texts the interpretative basis to overcome the trauma of the colonial encounter while taking into account the contribution of Western thought. Exemplary in this sense are the exegeses of the sacred texts, or *ijtihad* (40), carried out by Yadh Ben Achour, Muhammad al'Jabiri, Soheib Bencheikh, Fatema Mernissi, Tariq Ramadan, and especially Abdullah Ahmed An-Na'im. An-Na'im's *Toward an Islamic Reformation* makes a case for a historical, contextualized understanding of the Sunna and the Koran spanning from the Medina to the Mecca periods that enables one to substitute elements of *shari'a* law with more modern Koranic legislation that does not embrace Western forms of secularism and laicism.

Related to the question of Islam and modernity are issues of rule of law and individual rights. For Zolo, to address these questions, one must discard Western universalizing assumptions and recall that these concepts are deeply rooted in the Western tradition of secular thought. They emerged, often after long and violent struggles, from the Enlightenment onward, when individual rights acquired precedence over individual duties and transformed the function of sovereignty into the state's rule of law, charged with the acknowledgment and protection of rights. However, in Arab-Islamic tradition, the rights of individuals are subsumed under the collective right of the political and cultural community of which the individual is a member. This accounts not only for the absence of an individualistic idea of social relations but also for the central role of *shar'ia* and *fiqh* in all Islamic concepts of right. The state and its rule of law are concepts derived from the colonial imposition of Western models on native organizations. As such, they have not been fully integrated with organizations such as the *umma*—ethnic, familial, or tribal communities. However, as was the case in the relationship of Islam with modernity, Zolo points to the emergence of Islamic paths toward democracy, which he locates in contemporary revisiting of Islamic concepts of *ijma* (popular consensus) and *shura* (consultation) (50). Following Samir Amin, Zolo notes that these concepts are informing many practices of NGOs (nongovernmental organizations) and civil associations that have sprung up in Egypt, Kuwait, Morocco, Turkey, and other areas of the Islamic world.

Zolo also argues that a more open disposition toward Arab-Islamic culture can lead to reassess some beliefs that the West holds dear. These include secularism, modernization, democracy, and feminism. A dialogue with Islam over secularism could lead the West to realize that this value is not as broad as the West assumes. Particularly in areas where the Roman Catholic Church predominates, the clergy remains a hierarchical organization whose influence on the private and social lives of individuals often reaches the dogmatism that is criticized in other cultures (ibid. 51). Likewise, the concept of Western democracy requires rethinking. The representative and participatory organizations of yesteryear have been replaced by oligarchies, where elites shape the electorate through quasi-hegemonic control of information channels. Since these developments are engendering postdemocratic forms of video

oligarchies (ibid. 49), the West should rethink placing (Western) democracy at the forefront of the aggressive strategy of regime change and nation building implicit in the *Broader Middle East and North African Initiative*, started by Bush in 2004 and endorsed by NATO (ibid. 61). But a dialogue with the Islamic world can also lead the West to reassess the assumption that feminism is most compatible with secular, lay societies. In the rereadings of the Koran and the Sunna by Islamic feminists such as Zaynab al-Ghazali, Margot Badran, Assia Djebar, Nawal Sa'dawi, and Amina Wadud, it becomes possible to question the patriarchal interpretation of the *hadith* and the jurisprudence of the *fiqh* carried out by conservative *ulemah*, while enabling Muslim women to gain access to the religious roles of *imam* and *mufti* (ibid. 51).

Like Zolo, Cassano makes a case for the practice of interculturality, or what he calls the "demilitarization of the symbolic universes" that pit one culture against the other (as presented in Huntington's "clash of civilizations") in the essay "Necessità del Mediterraneo" (Cassano 95). Exemplary of such practice is the work of Amartya Sen, who questions the incommensurability between Eastern and Western traditions by discussing the existence of lay, skeptical, and rationalist currents in Indian thought. Mohammed Arkoun is another thinker whose reflection on the Islamic value of humanism could provide a bridge between the European and the Arabic-Islamic tradition. Yet Cassano finds that in the works of both Sen and Arkoun, the exchange of ideas is somewhat one-directional, since the West appears to have less to learn from the Indian and Islamic worlds. By contrast, Cassano discovers, in Islamic feminism and in the communal dimension of Islamic religion, precious teachings for the Occident. Cassano praises not only Fatema Mernissi's critique of the Islamic harem and other misogynist practices but also her argument that the freedom of the Western woman's body is not necessarily proof of her emancipation but the display of an object uncovered and consumed by the male's gaze. In this sense, Cassano argues, a dialogue between Arab-Islam and Western cultures allows the West to reassess its idea of the oppressed Islamic woman and the value of covering one's body: "Modesty can be revolutionary, if it no longer represents a male interdiction [. . .] but expresses a female's (and not only) desire to preserve one's individuality, of rendering precious the moment when we reveal ourselves to others [. . .] In a world devoid of decency, modesty introduces a measure, a healthy counterweight that, by limiting, enriches" (ibid. 100–101). Cassano's praise for the teachings that Islamic thought can provide to the West finally extends to Tariq Ramadan's reflection on the communal dimension of Islamic religion—from the prohibition of usury to the demand for responsibility toward other members of the community. By entering into a dialogue with these aspects of Islamic thought, one can question the solipsistic individualism of Western thought as well as its growing reliance on the model of the individual as a monad divorced from communal ties.

L'alternativa mediterranea exemplifies the intercultural practices described by Zolo and Cassano. Contributors as diverse as Margot Badran, Hafidha Chekir, Orsetta Giolo, and Renata Pepicelli probe issues ranging from the

rise of Islamic civil associations to the paths pursued in Muslim feminists' interpretations of the Koran toward nonsecularized forms of female emancipation. Likewise, the volume *Mediterraneo. Un dialogo fra le due sponde* provides examples of interculturality at work. Born from an initiative of *Jura Gentium*, the Centre for the Philosophy of International Law and Global Politics, it is the result of collaborative efforts between Italian and Tunisian researchers from the universities of Florence and El Manar. Its essays examine the question of Islam and modernity (Hamadi Redissi) and the rights of women (Hafidha Chekir), while engaging in sustained comparisons between Islamic and Western cultures on topics spanning the constitutional rights of individuals (Mohamed Moncef Bougerra), globalization (Lucia Re), and penal systems (Emilio Santoro). Collectively considered, these works exemplify how Italy's geophilosophical thought can transcend identity politics for a practice of interculturality capable of turning religious, ethnic, and cultural divides into the occasion for mutual enrichment and fruitful encounters.

As evinced throughout our argument, from the early 1990s onward, Italian intellectuals have become indispensable participants in geophilosophical discourses arising from post–Cold War Europe. Despite the different relationships that these intellectuals establish between Europe and its southern shores and their occasional falls into mythologizing representations, they share an idea of the Mediterranean as a powerful geosymbol that is helpful to understand the paradoxes of a world uneasily poised between supranational unity and the rise of social, ethnic, and cultural divides. In this sense, with Serge Latouche, we might say that the concept of Mediterranean difference "is undoubtedly utopian but it is necessary [. . .] for the future of the West and that of the world" ("La voce" 123).

Chapter 4

Sounds of Southern Shores

Musical Traditions and Adaptations in the Italian Mediterranean

Proceeding with our examination of the cluster of cultural material that testifies to a revisiting of the many sites and locations of Italy's Mediterraneanness, in this chapter, we will focus on the realm of popular music, a realm that has shown much ferment and creativity from the 1980s onward, from the pioneering work of Fabrizio De André's *Crêuza de mä* (1984) and two artists from Sicily and the city of Naples, respectively, Franco Battiato and Pino Daniele. Daniele, in particular, advances the idea that to be Neapolitan is to share the destiny of the trans-Atlantic other (i.e., African Americans and Cubans) and incorporates musical elements from a Mediterranean at large, thus opening a path for the daring experimentations of the groups Almamegretta and 99 Posse. While these musicians carry out the negotiations of Italy's Mediterranean locations through contaminations that move from the outside in, other southern musicians, including Eugenio Bennato and the band Sud Sound System, evoke the syncretism within, expressing concerns that widen the local struggles of the Salento and of southern Italy (i.e., unemployment, immigration, the *questione meridionale*, and the political corruption of the countryside) to a global dimension.

"Singing Outside the Chorus": Mediterranean Melodies

A peninsular music based on Italy's Mediterranean presence has existed much longer than the notion of Italy itself, though an in-depth analysis of the diachronic nature of these roots is beyond our scope here. Nevertheless, to examine contemporary Italian music *from* the South without addressing the phenomenon of musical syncretism in the Mediterranean would deny

our analysis the broader historical bent that we have pursued throughout this work, especially since the music we discuss is deeply indebted to a history of cultural syncretism in the region. Indeed, the musicians and songwriters we consider in this chapter consciously refused to embrace nationalistic standards pertaining to music as they were disseminated through offerings by national radio and television stations. Instead, they chose to refer to a history of hybridization that runs deep through the peninsula's musical traditions.

Famed ethnomusicologist Tullia Magrini once asked, in the title of a well-circulated article, "Where does the Mediterranean begin?" The question she posed refers to the cartography of Mediterranean ethnomusic, but it also underscores a temporal question of origins: "Mediterranean countries [. . .] have in common six thousand years of history during which they came into contact with one another [. . .] As they fought against and dominated each other, they also traded goods, encountered the art of their neighbors, spread religions, and generated the most striking syncretisms [. . .] The 'Mediterranean' is fascinating because it represents better than others a place in which one encounters countless diversities, and because it enables us to observe the ways in which these diversities manage to coexist, ignore each other, know each other, come into conflict, or blend" (Magrini 174). Indeed, to talk about Mediterranean music means to talk about its development through time and space, though the traces that remain do not always aid in understanding the directionality of the region's musical syncretism (from east to west and south to north, or vice versa). What seems clear, instead, is that the music of the Mediterranean basin is foundationally tied to performance (dance) and orality and that this oral tradition, as is often the case, has strong connections with ritual and myth.[1] Not surprisingly, one of the region's foundational epics, the *Iliad*, opens with an invocation to the Muses to "sing" of Achilles's fortunes, an *incipit* that ties music to the oral tradition of the *aedus*, the storyteller that travels from village to village, with musical accompaniment, to narrate a people's story. And the round (ritual) dances so pervasive in many areas in the Mediterranean correspond to the geographic oddity of the island of Delos, which is surrounded by the circular disposition of the Cyclades Islands and was the site of pre-Hellenic cults, even before it was assigned in Greek mythology as the birthplace of Apollo and Artemis.[2] Within this context, recent work in the areas of musical paleography and historiography has shown that music in the Mediterranean basin contains a number of stylistic, modal, and instrumental continuities that make it possible not so much to differentiate between Mediterranean music and music from other regions in the world but to find areas of convergence, influence, and syncretism through space and time that persist and are repeated into the Mediterranean basin's present.

In particular, characteristics common to Mediterranean music have endured through the ages and suggest a continuous, sometimes reciprocal, influence on cultures from neighboring areas such as the Middle East and sub-Saharan Africa. For example, cantillation, the ritual, rhythmic recitation

of readings from the Hebrew Bible, is also pervasive in Islamic prayer; it has been surmised that, through the presence of both religions in *al-Andalus*, it then was incorporated and transformed by the singing of mystic poetry first in *al-Andalus* itself (the *muwashshahat* of Arab poets and the liturgic *piyyutim* of Hebrew ritual) and later through the poetic performances of the *troubadors*, also into the recitative chants of Christian monasticism.[3] Similarly, popular musical and ritual dances such as the flamenco in Spain and the *tarantella* in southern Italy were influenced in their development both by diachronic processes stretching back to pre-Hellenic and Greek rituals and by patterns of migration and domination that brought nomadic gypsy tribes from the Indus river in contact with other oppressed populations in the Mediterranean region (Cavallini 145–154).[4] In a more recent past, the passage of Portuguese slaves into the Iberian Peninsula also explains how American jazz rhythms would seem to reprise sub-Saharan African rhythms that had been incorporated in traditional dances of the Mediterranean (e.g., flamenco, *tammurriata*) with the arrival of American soldiers in Europe during the first half of the twentieth century.

Given this rich tradition of cross-pollination and syncretism in the music of the Mediterranean, the nature of Italy as a *locus* of migratory exchanges, conquest and domination by foreign people, and ports dedicated to merchant traffic and navigation has always encouraged a process of Creolization of its music. Indeed, from Greek influences in the colonies of Magna Graecia to Arab ones during the Berber-led conquest and subjugation of Sicily by the Aghlabid, Fatimid, and Kalbid dynasties, to the Spanish rule of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, and even to the influences of American jazz following the liberation of Italy during World War II (a return, as we noticed earlier, to the sub-Saharan rhythms left behind by the Portuguese slave trade), Italy's musical tradition is one of creative assimilation of rhythms, sounds, and textual contents that transcends the rigidity of national boundaries.[5] Not surprisingly, the intellectual and artistic concern with the Mediterranean in Italian culture during the past thirty years not only has brought renewed attention to Italy's prenational musical tradition but also has enabled significant expressions of musical experimentation to emerge within this panorama. And while it is beyond the purview of this chapter to cover the overall (and vast) extent of this experimentation, our goal is to show, through the analysis of significant voices, a growth from origins that are still somewhat rooted in a Western-centric vision toward a more global understanding of Mediterranean ties and influences.

Fabrizio De André: Pathways to World Music

Fabrizio De André, the talented poet, lyricist, and singer from Genoa, once credited himself with predating the phenomenon of "world music" in Italy (Fasoli 63)[6] if not the Mediterranean basin. While the claim lays waste to a tradition of singers and musicians that, even in Italy, predate De André's foray into musical experimentation toward Mediterranean sounds (one need

only think of Demetrio Stratos—but also Teresa De Sio and De André's collaborator in many ventures, Mauro Pagani),[7] his seminal album *Crêuza de mä* provides a point of departure for experimentations into Mediterranean musical sounds that cannot be discounted. The title's reference to the sea ("Pathway to/of the sea") and De André's ties to Italy's most important port on the Tyrrhenian Sea offer helpful clues to our musical analysis. Indeed, since most musicians we discuss have connections to cities by the sea, it suggests that maritime communication plays a significant role in the process of imbrication and cultural grafting that their music exemplifies.

De André was born in Genoa in 1940 of a wealthy family of Piedmontese origins, and as a youth, his interests turned to music. He gravitated toward American jazz and country-Western music early on but became famous for songs heavy on storytelling and folklore, where he embraced the fate of the poor and the dispossessed.[8] This musical experimentation continued throughout his life, though it was after his 1979 kidnapping by Sardinian shepherds that he expanded his repertoire into linguistic registers that were more closely related to dialects and lost traditions (Molteni 18). His meeting with Mauro Pagani was decisive in this sense, as De André turned his attention toward the Mediterranean and Genoese dialect, a language that he had not learned from birth but had picked up during a youth spent frequenting the bars and backrooms of working-class Genoa (ibid. 19–20).

Pagani and De André's initial project entailed composing songs that would rely on instrumentation from various coasts of the Mediterranean to tell the story of an Italian sailor who returns home speaking an invented Arabic-sounding language similar to the Sabir.[9] The idea was to represent the heterogeneity not only of the sailor's experiences but also of the musical traditions of the Mediterranean shores. Only during a second phase of the project, De André decided to use Genoese dialect for his lyrics, because he noticed that it "includes at least 2,500 words of Arabic origin: this shows how contacts with the Arab world were quite intense [. . .] After all, Genoa [. . .] focused its commercial ventures on Arab Africa" (Viva 189).[10] Genoese being as close to the Sabir as any language De André could invent allowed him to set appropriate lyrics to complement Pagani's music (Plastino 274).[11]

An assiduous reader of history, De André was aware that Genoa, as one of the most important seafaring republics of the late Middle Ages and renaissance, established trade routes to the Levant, where it came into contact not only with Arab-speaking traders but also with the many cultures and languages of the region (and in the thirteenth century it actually controlled the routes toward Asia after establishing colonies in Pera and Kaffa and signing an alliance with Byzantium that gave the city control of the Bosphorus channel, replacing Venice as a trade partner) (Abulafia, *Great Sea* 354–355). In addition, the ownership of Sardinia and Corsica not only put the Genoese into close proximity with *al-Andalus* but also made them susceptible to the raids by Saracen pirates, who attacked their merchant ships as they returned to the Italian coast. These frequent and protracted encounters with Arab culture resulted in the redaction in Arabic of many mercantile documents still

housed in Genoa's customhouse, while the Genoese dialect became heavily inflected with Arab terms.[12]

Genoese had another advantage, as De André and Pagani conceived it. Because it is a language that accommodates hybridity and otherness, it served a greater subversive purpose. Both Pagani and De André wanted to create sounds and lyrics that would wrestle Italian music away from prevailing industry models, which were heavily influenced by American pop music and relied on a homogenized, standardized Italian that had been purified of its regional inflections. This aversion to American musical models also allowed them to infuse their work with a strong anti-American political message at a time when models of cultural consumption imported from the United States were dominating Italy's markets and generating pockets of protests from left-leaning intellectuals. Genoese, like Genoa itself, situated at the borders of contemporary Italian music, which ran along the Milan-Rome-Naples axis, fit the bill (Viva 188–189).[13] Indeed, as a language that maintained its roots in popular speech and, contrary to official Italian, had not been constructed on literary models since its inception, it allowed De André to represent and narrate the stories of the dispossessed and the lower classes with more verisimilitude—without translating and domesticating it for a wider Italian public.[14]

Released in 1984, *Crêuza de mä* achieved a much wider success than either De André or Pagani expected.[15] The title of the album and first song refers to the narrow pathways that run between the walls that separate properties on the Genoese hills and descend rapidly to the sea—walls that attest in and of themselves to Genoa's encounters with Arab pirates and other marauders from the sea. They were strategically created to provide an advantage for the city's denizens, as they funneled the invaders into narrow, restricted areas that could be defended from above more easily and with less expenditure of military force. Thus the *crêuza de mä* metaphorically offered De André and Pagani a link between sea and land; between invader and citizen; and between social outsiders, the fishermen and smugglers, and the ultimate insider, the Dria (Andrea) mentioned in the first song, "Crêuza de mä" (in which it is not difficult to recognize De André himself): "Shadows of faces, faces of sailors, / Where do you come from, where are you going [. . .] / And whom will we find in the stone house, / of Andrea who a sailor is not? [. . .] / we will sail on the rocks in the boat of wine, / Owner of the rope, rotted by water and salt, / Which ties us and leads us back onto a pathway to the sea."[16] The juxtaposition between the world of the sailors, with its risks and longing for home, and that of the host, who elsewhere in the song treats them to fried fish, white wine from Portofino, and lamb's brain cooked in the same wine, reminds one of the stratification of the social order established in Genoa since the Middle Ages. On the one hand were the bankers who, among the first in the Western world, built financial empires based on speculation.[17] On the other were the merchants and sailors, cosmopolitan travelers of the Arab Mediterranean, who were the foot soldiers of mercantile adventures and risked their lives to enable these early capitalist enterprises

to thrive.¹⁸ Brought together, however, these worlds point to the fluidity of Mediterranean trade, which could break down barriers of ethnicity, religion, and class status while favoring cultural crossings to and from the western and eastern coasts of the sea's expanse.

More poignant are the remaining songs of the collection, as they cast doubts on the homogeneity of culture, history, and tradition cultivated by Western modernity when they do not question its presence as a force of disruption in the region. Emblematic in this sense is the song "Sidun," considered among the highest expressions of De André's talent. The title refers to the city of Sidon in Lebanon, one of the oldest cities on the Mediterranean (dating from the fourth millennium BCE) and a center of Phoenician commercial venture in pre-Hellenic times but also a city that, through its plurimillennial history, was conquered and subjugated in turn by Assyrians, Babylonians, Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, Arabs, crusading kings, and finally the Ottoman Turks.¹⁹ As if to confirm the city's history as not only a multicultural cauldron but also a site of oppression, the song takes as its point of departure the 1982 Lebanon War, which implicated not only Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organization but also Syria, the Lebanese government, and UN forces.²⁰ The song opens with the voices of Ariel Sharon, critiquing US negotiations with Arafat, and Ronald Reagan, praising Italy's intervention on behalf and support of Israel's military mission. Then De André renders the lament of a Sidonian father whose son has died, crushed by an Israeli tank and by the hatred of soldiers who "chase after people as if they were game / [. . .] and [pour] in our wounds the poisonous seed of deportation, / so that from plain to sea / nothing of ours might grow." Musically, the voices of Western imperial modernity, Reagan and Sharon, rendered in the spoken dialect of public pronouncements delivered for political effect, are a harsh counterpoise for the beautifully modulated, poetic song of the dispossessed Syrian father (though the latter's lament is rendered in Genoese, the linguistic otherness of De André's dialect that helps convey the plight of the subaltern). Regarding content, the father's closing words ("Goodbye my son, legacy of mine buried / in this burning city") echo instead the lament of Sidonian fathers through history who have had to see the death of their sons mirrored in the destruction wrought on the city by armies and fleets of invaders.

A different kind of intra-Mediterranean exchange, based on respect and the recognition of the enemy's valor, is proposed by De André and Pagani in the song "Sinàn Capudàn Pascìa." Based on real events, it sings the story of the scion of a Genoese family named Cicala ("cicada"). Captured by Ottoman Turks, he was enslaved on a sultan's ship, brought to Istanbul, and inducted in the Ottoman Corps. He converted to Islam and rose rapidly in the court of Süleyman the Magnificent and his successor Selim III before using his seafaring expertise to lead the Ottoman fleet in the capture of Tunis. In recognition of this and other deeds, he was twice made *kapudan pasha*, or grand admiral, of the Ottoman fleet (his name having changed from Scipione Cicala to Cigalazade Yusuf Sinan Pasha).²¹ De André's song somewhat fictionalizes these events, suggesting that Cicala rose in the Ottoman Empire's hierarchy

because he saved the sultan and his boat from being shipwrecked. In doing so, De André turns an adversarial relationship between the Genoese and the Ottoman Turks into acts that are mutually beneficial to both parties, providing a different model for how the relationships between areas of the Mediterranean might be resolved.

The album concludes with songs that return musicians and audience to the other Genoa (the song "A dumenega," which describes the public Sunday walk of prostitutes, who were allowed to parade in the presence of the citizenry on their day off, causing chaos and disruption but also hilarity as they acknowledged and/or were reluctantly acknowledged by their well-to-do clientele) and to the mournful lament of the city's sailors (the song "Da a me riva," wherein the departing sailor acknowledges that he can only hold on to his beloved during his travels on the seas and in foreign lands by carrying "a picture of you in younger times / so I can still kiss Genoa / on your mothball-tasting mouth"). Both acknowledge the real life of a port city like Genoa, since sailors and prostitutes belong to an economy of exchange that is characteristic of the (temporary) migration of labor from one shore of the Mediterranean to the other.[22]

Crêuza de mä marks a foundational break in the music of De André, both in the intentions of the artist and in its reception by audiences and critics alike. With the benefit of hindsight, however, it is possible to notice that the premises on which De André and Pagani based their work were still inflected by a 1984, Western-based understanding not only of their subject matter but also about the meaning of musical syncretism in the Mediterranean. As Goffredo Plastino points out, while *Crêuza de mä* employs a variety of musical instruments from the broader Mediterranean area, the arrangements are mostly based on traditional Western tonality: "The aesthetic of the disc is that of imitation and recreation, and it is essentially oriented toward appropriation. The Greek, Turkish, and 'Arab' instruments are used in such a way that it is not always easy or necessary for the listener to identify their provenance. Their cleaned-up sound renders them more enjoyable for Italian audiences [. . .] The Mediterranean sound is obtained through the mediation of a Western pop musician (Pagani), so there is no need for external collaboration. No Turkish, Greek, or Arab musicians were enlisted to collaborate in the recording" (280).[23]

The outcome is an album that pursues melodic arrangements and recreates an Oriental-like atmosphere from a Western perspective, resulting, at least at the level of musical arrangements, in an Orientalizing reproduction of what Arab and Middle Eastern music should sound like. As a result, De André and Pagani's album only partially succeeds in its intent to subvert mainstream Italian music. While it defamiliarizes the audience's expectations at the level of language (Genoese instead of Italian) and instrumentation (adding *oud*, *gaida*, and so on but without renouncing guitars, mandolins, and traditional orchestra instruments), it still relies on arrangements and melodies that are traditionally Western. Thus it reduces the representation of eastern-sounding

music to a studio-based reconstruction of what eastern music should sound like rather than on the actual musicality of the East.[24]

Franco Battiato: Songs from the Experimental South

De André and Pagani's reconstruction of a musical Mediterranean *koiné* subsumes otherness to a somewhat Western-centric vision. While we do not wish to link geography, biology, and culture, the southern city of Naples and the region of Sicily present, with regard to their musical experimentation, more varied outcomes. Even more than the seafaring republic of Genoa, their history is one of contamination and *métissage*, caused by the succession of rulers and cultures that alternated in controlling Sicily and southern Italy through the ages, as we have already shown in Chapters 1 and 2. Neapolitan and Sicilian music have always been extremely eclectic and, from our perspective, more difficult to categorize. Yet, with regard to the issues we discuss in this book, two musicians emerge as emblematic for the musical traditions of Sicily and Naples, respectively: Franco Battiato and Pino Daniele.

Battiato, the Sicilian songwriter and composer (as well as poet and movie director), is a contemporary of De André. Like De André, his approach to music has always been one of broad innovation and forward-looking experimentation. Both have also shared a desire to unsettle and innovate the Italian music industry. Feeling that the latter relied too much on Anglo-centric models, they used their knowledge of the country's cultural and musical complexity to introduce countermodels that would oppose the general flattening and simplification of mainstream music. However, if De André embraced folklore and tradition, Battiato initially veered toward electronica, creating experimental and avant-garde albums. During a second phase of his musical development, in connection with philosophical and musical explorations into mysticism, Battiato achieved a strange union by integrating a variety of world sounds with more mainstream contemporary pop music and by tying philosophical concepts to social critique through lyrics that veered toward a surrealist *bricolage* of images. Indeed, with the album *L'era del cinghiale bianco* (1979), Battiato's new tendency toward syncretic musical styles and lyrics emerge full force. Not only does he borrow from Celtic mysticism to provide the image of the white boar as a symbol of knowledge, but his interest for the East, as the cradle of civilization and origin of his own knowledge ("Indescribable odors / in the evening air / students from Damascus / all dressed the same way / shadows of my own identity"), emerges in both the titles (e.g., "Strade dell'Est," "Luna indiana," and "Pasqua etiope") and the words of many songs (Ruoppolo).[25] In addition, in the songs "Pasqua etiope" and "Stranizza d'amuri," Battiato switches to singing entirely in Latin, Greek, and Sicilian, a practice of linguistic experimentation he then carries on throughout his career.

Battiato's next album, *Patriots* (1980), continues this musical experimentation with melodic arrangements heavily influenced by eastern

rhythms and tonalities. Here, however, Battiato becomes more explicitly engaged in a frontal attack against contemporary Western culture and its music. From the opening track, "Up Patriots to Arms" (in English in the original), he explicitly diverges from contemporary trends by superimposing a brief section of Arabic speech onto a few bars from the overture to Wagner's *Tannhäuser*. Battiato does not explicitly explain the juxtaposition of Arabic and Wagner, though the subsequent ironic parallelism between those who believe in Ayatollah Khomeini's holiness and those who fight on behalf of the bourgeois ("you always get hooked / you barricade in the square on behalf of the bourgeoisie") leads to the object of his final criticism: "The Empire of music has reached us / brimming with lies; / it's not my fault that performances / are filled with eon smoke and laser beams, / if the dance floors are full / of idiots who move." Clearly, Battiato sets up a comparison/contrast between East and West in music (i.e., traditional Arabic cantillation versus Wagnerian opera) and societal structures (i.e., Khomeini's Islamic fundamentalism versus Western capitalism) that devolves in the superficial nothingness of contemporary (Western) music (which in the refrain is charged with "depressing" the singer). In doing so, he traces a descent from the deeper engagement of traditional music to the blind acceptance of fundamentalist messages—be they religious or consumeristic—to a final lack of beliefs in anything, exemplified by mindless bodies in motion on a dance floor. Contemporary American music (the not-too-veiled allusion to the "empire" of music) thus stands accused of making acolytes worldwide who are stupefied by its external messages and cease to live meaningful lives based in reality (as the Arabic voice had said, "the entire world lives on hope, but stops living its life").

Having opened the album with such a scathing critique of consumerism, Battiato next explores cultural and historical connections between Italy and other areas of the Mediterranean, not only because of their geographical contiguity, but also for their ability to inspire alternative modes of existence in light of current tensions. Thus the song "Venezia-Istanbul," while reminding us of the route that the Orient Express took from Italy to Turkey, opens with lyrics that stress the commonality of their cultural and historical roots ("Venice reminds me instinctively of Istanbul: / the same buildings attached to the sea, / red sunsets disappearing into nothing") and stand in marked contrast with the song's final message, a reference to the increased tension between the West and Arab countries in the early 1980s ("Once upon a time one murdered Christians; / then, with the excuse of witchcraft, /they started to kill pagans. / Hail Mary. / Now, so that the future sun might still shine on the earth, / let us create some space with another war").

Equally important is "Arabian Song," in which the degradation of consumerism is the implicit other of the world described in the song:

(Arabic refrain)
The village teacher said:
I climbed the mountain.

May peace be with you all,
Now I can live.
(Italian)
My students were raised with goat milk and wheat bread;
In those days they had not invented silly entertainments like the news hour;
When I was younger I believed that freedom existed.
[. . .]
On Sundays and the holidays we organized our home parties.

Battiato, whose studies included Arabic and Sufism as well as Eastern and Western esoteric religions (Cozzari 26), here presents the ideal of a slower world that corresponds, in many ways, to the one described by Franco Cassano (*Southern Thought and Other Essays* 9–15). Indeed, he associates freedom, which in the West is claimed to be the purview of unfettered capitalism, with a world in which the news hour is not considered "entertainment" and wherein the meaning of life ("Now I can live") comes from activities that stress reflection (climbing mountains) and companionship (organizing home parties) or that relate human beings to the land (again, climbing mountains, but also eating food directly from its source). Moreover, by introducing the song through the Arabic refrain, Battiato suggests the East as the source for reflective contemplation that allows one to slow down and appreciate modes of existence that have been discarded by contemporary domestication. While this representation is imbued with a heavy dose of idealistic projection, the East thus provides an alternative model to balance the "rat race" of contemporary life.

Battiato continued to meld his critique of Western capitalism and commercialization with Eastern mysticism and musical experimentation in subsequent albums. *Orizzonti perduti* (1983), *Mondi lontanissimi* (1985), and Fisionomica (1988)—where the song "Veni l'autunnu," stands out for being entirely sung in Sicilian and Arabic to show the proximity of not only the two languages but also their cultures and ethnicities—and especially *Caffè de la Paix* (1993), in which traditional Western instruments are fully integrated with Middle Eastern and northern African counterparts, all evince his desire to synthesize contemporary and traditional sounds as well as to find points of contact between the philosophical and religious worldviews of the Mediterranean region. With the album *Messa arcaica* (1994), Battiato's production turned toward spirituality and philosophical abstraction in a move that distanced his subsequent production from Mediterranean syncretism, drawing him back toward Western-themed music (classical instrumentation, opera). As was the case with De André (who, after *Crêuza de mä*, and through collaborative recordings with Mauro Pagani, Teresa De Sio, and the bands Tazenda and Li Troubaires de Coumboscuro, returned to ethnic music in the 1990 album *Le nuvole*), Battiato's overall opus suggests that his interest in Mediterranean musical fusion was the result of a *zeitgeist* focused on musical innovation outside of traditional channels. Both songwriters expressed this protest *against* mainstream and consumerist culture by turning to minority

musical traditions that they knew existed in their own cultural background. Yet this turn toward the other was never fully embraced: in their music, the other is never fully given a voice but remains a projection of the musicians' creative imagination. As a result, their work, while innovative and "archeological" in the sense that it incorporated instruments and languages that are integral to Italy's Mediterranean past, is not the expression of collaboration and exchange with musicians from other Mediterranean shores but rather a Western reconstruction of how their music might sound.

A Different Experimentation: Pino Daniele and "Neapolitanness"

The music of Neapolitan songwriter Pino Daniele departs considerably from Battiato's and De André's. Working in the tradition of Neapolitan music, which is among the most stereotyped and imitated in the world,[26] Daniele reinvented many of its sounds, working with musicians from all over the world. Throughout, he remained faithful to his origin while expanding his repertoire through grafts and borrowings.

Daniele's creativity emerged early in his career as he pursued the contamination of Neapolitan sounds through their overlap with unlikely musical neighbors, jazz and blues. Lest we think this fusion unseemly, there are historical precedents for its occurrence. For one, as we remarked in previous chapters, Naples was, for a long time, under Spanish control. Elements of Arab tonality and instrumentation had transformed Spanish music during the *al-Andalus* period. Subsequently, this music had itself been contaminated by sounds of sub-Saharan origin during the Portuguese and Spanish slave trade. From there, under the rule of the Spanish Bourbon kings, they made their way into the Neapolitan musical tradition, as evinced most clearly by the prevalence of percussion instruments such as the tambourine in the Neapolitan equivalent of the *tarantella*—the *tammurriata*, the folk dance most famously associated with Naples and its environs. More recently, this recondite assonance with African and eastern rhythms was reawakened in the interwar period by the popularity of jazz in Italy under Fascism,[27] and during and after World War II, specifically in Naples, by the massive presence of American soldiers in the Bay of Naples, as NATO and the US military made the city one of their strategic operation centers.[28] Finally, because recent migratory trends have established Naples as a major landing point and final destination for North and West African immigrants, the city continues to be a meeting place for a variety of musical crossovers and traditions.[29]

Daniele's fusion of Neapolitan lyrics with the syncopated rhythms of jazz and the soulful melodies of blues is evident in his first album, *Terra mia* (1977). The novelty of Daniele's experiment rests in his use of music that rhythmically breaks with Western melodies (originally it gave voice to the alterity of African Americans in the United States) to represent the plight of the Neapolitan people—people who, at one time or the other, have been victimized by the feudal rule of foreign nobles and kings; by the Camorra,

the criminal organization centered in the city and its peripheries; and even by the American occupying forces after the war and once the city became one of NATO's command centers in the Mediterranean. Emblematic in this sense are excerpts from the album's first song, "Napule è," and the subsequent "Ce sta chi ci penza," both sung in Neapolitan dialect:

> ("Napule è")
> Naples is filled with music,
> Naples is a dream
> known to the whole world
> [. . .] but they don't know the whole truth.

> ("Ce sta chi ci penza")
> America arrived here,
> and it brought us many things,
> [. . .]
> but now it refuses to leave.
> It has taken the best places in this city,
> while we spit our blood.

In the first song, Daniele plays on traditional stereotypes of Naples in mainstream culture—a sun-drenched city of dreams, whose friendly people and musical tradition balance its happy-go-lucky attitude—before turning the image upside down in the last verse, where the reality of life in the city is hinted at but not shared with outsiders. In the second song, the America from which he borrows musical riffs and soulful rhythms is nevertheless depicted as an oppressive ruler that still controls the city physically and emotionally, though the war and the need for its armies have long since passed. Bluesy rhythms enhance the lyrics in both songs, underscoring the melancholic nature of these observations.

In subsequent years, Daniele would continue to expand on the fusion of Neapolitan melodies with jazz and blues, becoming the main representative of the "Napoli Power" movement, a group of musicians who, raised at the margins of official musical channels, created avant-garde works that carried subversive and antiestablishment messages.[30] Daniele often achieved this social critique by underscoring the similarities between his cultural makeup and the genetic otherness of the African American experience both in his second album, *Pino Daniele* (1979), and in the title of the third album, *Nero a metà* (1980), where, by suggesting that he is half black, Daniele reinforces the idea that to be Neapolitan is to know and share the destiny and struggle of African Americans as well as to question racism and classism as related to skin color. In the song "Je so' pazzo," for example, Daniele compares himself to the seventeenth-century revolutionary hero Masaniello—who had led a successful, popular insurrection against the Spanish viceroy, after which he was accused of madness and assassinated—before suggesting that he has painted himself "black" (an obvious allusion to the syncretic adoption of jazz

and blues in his music) because "a black Masianello is more striking" and his message might be more widely received in the panorama of conformity that surrounds him.[31]

Given the early success of his music, both locally and internationally, between 1981 and 1984 Pino Daniele was invited to collaborate with musicians worldwide, including Argentinean saxophonist Gato Barbieri, Steven Gadd, Richie Havens, and jazz legend Wayne Shorter. As his renown grew during these years, Daniele was accused, with some accuracy, of having abandoned social critique in his songs to focus on commercial success and musical experimentation that was an end in itself. The album *Musicante* (*Music Player*),[32] released in 1984, signals a turning point in Daniele's work. It grew out of collaboration with Cuban musicians following his participation in the Verdadero Festival and a concert in Havana, and it incorporates both African and Cuban rhythms, a development that Daniele consciously tied both to the common past of Naples and Cuba as Spanish-ruled dominions and to the influence of African slaves on the musical traditions of these regions: "Cubans, also, descend from the Spanish, our veins share some of the same blood. They are Africans with Spanish influences, very 'close' to Neapolitans as far as temperament and character" (Daniele cited in Ranaldi 49). *Musicante* thus reveals an expansion of Daniele's musical syncretism into areas outside the Mediterranean, a choice that makes him a precursor of intercultural practices wherein the Italian South is equated with the Souths of the world and their connection is underscored by thematic and cultural assonances.

This conscious return to music from the margins pervades Daniele's recordings in the following years, until his withdrawal from the public eye in 1989, when he was diagnosed with a severe cardiac deficiency. Three of the four albums he produced in those years, *Ferryboat* (1985), *Bonne soirée* (1987), and the masterpiece of his mature work, *Mascalzone latino* (1989), benefit from the Neapolitan songwriter's collaboration with musicians from southern areas of the world. In *Ferryboat*, Daniele expands on his *métissage* between Neapolitan and Cuban sounds, adding the Latin influences of the Argentinean saxophonist Gato Barbieri[33] and experimenting occasionally with Arab rock. The latter becomes central in *Bonne soirée*, an album influenced by Daniele's collaboration with French and Arab bands, which signals a further contamination of Daniele's blues rhythms by sounds and instrumentation originating in the North African area of the Mediterranean. These developments in Daniele's work reveal that, unlike De André and Battiato, he does not just co-opt or recreate Mediterranean-sounding music; instead, he allows musicians from various areas of the Mediterranean and cognate areas to influence and transform his own music, expanding its range and broadening its contamination to create a more complex and inclusive repertoire of music and lyrics.

Daniele's successful incorporation of musical elements from the Mediterranean at large spawned, especially through the influence of "Napoli Power," even more complex hybrid experimentation by a younger generation of the city's musicians. This is most clearly visible in the music of Almamegretta and

99 Posse (both formed in 1991), two bands that fuse rhythms of the Neapolitan tradition with techno, reggae (including its ragamuffin derivation), rap, and Arab sounds to explicitly criticize the social stereotypes and racism promoted by parties such as the Northern League.[34] For example, the most well-known song by Almamegretta (whose name literally means "migrant soul"), "Figli di Annibale," ironically underscores how the dark features of many Italians do not originate in a mythically pure Italian stock but in the miscegenation enacted by the Carthaginian Hannibal and his troops during the many years they spent in Italy fighting against the Roman Empire:

> Hannibal [. . .] ruled over Italy fifteen to twenty years,
> this is why many Italians have dark skin,
> [. . .]
> During the last war, a few African-Americans
> filled Europe with black babies.
> What do you think would happen in twenty years
> of military dominion by an army of Africans in the Italian South?
> [. . .]
> This is why, this is why we are Hannibal's children,
> Southerners, [. . .]
> Mediterranean blood, children of Hannibal.

The references to the "blackness" of Italians and to African American soldiers procreating in the postwar years reminds one (and might be a citation) of Daniele's references to the American NATO presence in the Bay of Naples. However, Almamegretta's focus is more polemical. For one, Almamegretta ties military occupation, whether in the far or recent past, with genetic miscegenation, a biological colonization that originates in the violent relationship between conqueror and conquered, echoing Naples's history of subjugation through the centuries. Additionally, though the focus is on the "Southerners [. . .] Mediterranean blood, children of Hannibal," the group suggests that this biological history belongs not only to Naples but to Italy as a whole— even those who, infected by grim regionalism, trumpet racist political rants against southerners and the new migrant populations (discourses that came to a head in 1996 with the election of Caribbean-born Denny Mendez to the title of Miss Italia).[35]

99 Posse's most recognizable song, "Stop that Train" (title originally in English), is a remake of the famous love song by reggae musicians Bob Marley and Peter Tosh ("Stop that train / I want to get on / My baby, she is leaving me now"). As was the case for Almamegretta, the Neapolitan group transforms the song into a political anthem by superimposing charged lyrics (mostly in Neapolitan dialect) onto the original rhythms:[36]

> (Neapolitan)
> Stop that train / we want to get on / we want justice and freedom [. . .]
> (Spanish)
> Because we all need and demand freedom, democracy and justice [. . .]

(Neapolitan)
We must catch this train / And talk *with* globalization /
Otherwise who knows what damage it might cause us.

Here, 99 Posse borrows the musical rhythms of reggae (in itself a music borne of a minority culture rebelling against colonial rule and looking to Africa for its spiritual and political independence) to voice the fears of those who are unable to jump on the globalization train and thus worry that their freedom and rights will be trampled ("between modified tomato sauces / closed borders and the free market / we find ourselves under the control / organized at the State's discretion"). The lyrics, alternating between Italian, Neapolitan, and Spanish, convey the sense that people the world over are being left behind by globalization, while also historicizing Naples's past through the languages of oppressors and the oppressed. In addition, the superimposition of multiple languages on one of reggae's anthems ties the subaltern status of the Neapolitan underclasses with that of dispossessed people the world over.

In the music of Pino Daniele, Almamegretta, and 99 Posse, then, we see a swerve away and forward from the experimentation of De André and Battiato. The latter recognized the validity of imbrication to affirm the common roots of Mediterranean musical history and culture, but their perspective was still Western centric, as it favored traditional, classically Western arrangements and limited the experimentation to instrumental borrowings. Nonetheless, they critically engaged the uneven economic and political relationships of the region, condemning Western standards of freedom and democracy when they came at the expense of people who inhabit the other shores of the Mediterranean. Pino Daniele's experimentations with first jazz and then Caribbean and northern African music transformed the presence of southern sounds from borrowings to collaborations. His music, while still situated in the Neapolitan tradition (mostly at the level of lyrics and linguistic expression), expands outward toward the world's other Souths, consciously searching for relationships based on a common history of oppression and domination. Finally, Almamegretta and 99 Posse exemplify what we might call, borrowing from Robertson,[37] "glocal" musical culture. Adapting rhythms and instrumentations traditionally alien to Italian music but rendered commonplace in the peninsula's musical economy by the flows of globalization (e.g., rap and reggae), these groups superimpose on them strong messages of protest tied to local economic, social, and political issues. In doing so, not only do they continue a tradition of activism and resistance found in pockets of southern music (as we will see with Eugenio Bennato), but they also relate this resistance to musical forms that originated in other Souths of the world (whether geographical or symbolic) to voice similar concerns.

Eugenio Bennato and Sud Sound System: Music from the Italian South for the Global Souths

Pino Daniele, Almamegretta, and 99 Posse work, so to speak, from the outside in. There are other southern musicians who, working culturally within their tradition (in some cases, for decades), achieve different levels of syncretism to revitalize their music, while opening that same tradition to contamination and innovation that reveals a clear awareness of musical relationships across the Mediterranean.

The Neapolitan songwriter Eugenio Bennato, whose career spans forty years, is one such musician who chose a tortuous way to come to his art. Though born into a musical family and trained to learn a variety of instruments as a youth,[38] Bennato initially pursued a degree in nuclear physics at the University of Naples. This intellectual pursuit did not deter him from studying and establishing strong interests in Neapolitan folk traditions—interests that led him to found, in 1969, the *Nuova Compagnia di Canto Popolare*, a group of musicians dedicated to the preservation and revaluation of ethnic and popular traditions in Italy.[39] A conservationist and archeological ethos to preserve traditional rhythms and sounds of the South, especially Calabria and his own region, Campania, informs this first phase of Bennato's musical career and reflects the type of traditionalism that is often attributed to a fear of modernity and globalizing forces (Pieterse 45–68). This traditionalism carried over to the second phase of Bennato's career, which coincides with his meeting in 1976 with the minstrel Andrea Sacco and the *chitarra battente*, a guitar with a larger soundboard and only four steel strings that players often use as a percussion instrument. Sacco's use of this guitar to replicate the many rhythmic variations of folkloric dances led Bennato, in collaboration with Carlo D'Angiò, to create, in 1976, Musicanova, a group whose goal was no longer only the preservation of folkloric traditions but also their recreation.

The most significant album released by Musicanova was *Brigante se more* (1980), which shows a transformation and radicalization of Bennato's objectives and musical sonority. Here, instruments like the *tamburello* (small handheld drum) and the *chitarra battente* appear more often, and the rhythms emphasize repetition and the ballads usually associated with the dances and songs of hill towns in Basilicata and Calabria.[40] (Not surprisingly, the thematic focus lies in the life of bandits in these regions, especially in the postunification years of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.) The lyrics themselves show a progression from the neutral subject matter of the *Nuova Compagnia* to the revaluation of phenomena, such as nineteenth-century brigandage itself, that a prevailing northwestern gaze had harshly condemned as typical expressions of a space resistant to the values of the North. Indeed, in the album's title song, brigandage itself is interpreted as a reaction to the presence of the Piedmontese armies in the South following Italian unification, since they implemented harsh living conditions on southern peasant populations to bring the South as a whole

in line with northern Italian and European models:[41] "The land is ours, so hands off / [. . .] / the true wolf that eats human beings / is the Piedmontese we want to throw out / [. . .] / One is born human but dies a bandit / [. . .] / and if we die, bring us a flower and curse this freedom." Brigandage thus assumes for the Neapolitan singers if not a positive connotation then at least the function of social and political response against the injustices perpetrated by northern politicians and their armies on the weakest social groups in the South. Significantly, in attempting to recreate the sounds and mood of brigand culture, Bennato and D'Angiò were forced to improvise, since documents pertaining to this musical tradition had all but disappeared from the South's cultural memory. While this was due to the negative and often inaccurate portrayal of brigandage in official histories, their reconstruction points to a revisionist attempt to historicize a bygone time and the paradoxical recreation of a tradition from the perspective of identity politics. As Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger point out, albeit in a different context, this practice risks inculcating values that are assumed to show continuity with the past even though they are mostly constructed anew as a means to resist hegemonic cultural models.[42]

Already in the late 1970s and early 1980s, then, Bennato had become aware that musical traditions of the South could become a vehicle of counterhegemonic resistance to the world's Northwest, for which, as we have seen in Chapter 2, the South is synonymous with a backward society where misery, repression, and superstition dominate. While Bennato continued his musical experimentation and the capillary work of disseminating southern music through repeated concert tours throughout Italy (voicing a belief that music must have a performative component to transform its audiences, thus returning music to its mythic and ritual origins, as noted in the introduction),[43] it was not until the 1990s that his musical interests expanded to encompass a broader artistic range for this music: "I thought then the entire movement of ethnic music, which did not have a name, could be understood as 'taranta.' Before no one had thought of tying together the ethnic music of the South to one rhythm and dance. In Spain, this is what 'Flamenco' subsumes, as it is not only a dance, but a very strong identity-formation. The term 'Power' wished to convey its modernity. This movement was immediately embraced not only by musicians, but by actors, movie directors and a variety of artists. Today 'Taranta Power' is our way of being southerners with an undeniable identity" (De Simone).

The goals of Taranta Power, the organization he helped create,[44] were thus not limited to the conservation of musical traditions, songs, and instruments and to the formal experimentation within their parameters. Instead, this movement wished to collect within it all those artistic endeavors that could transform the southern experience into a cultural expression of resistance to dominant musical and artistic models that imposed a flattening of experience onto the Italian contemporary artistic scene. Bennato highlights this exploration by juxtaposing the rediscovery of the *taranta*[45] to Andalusian *flamenco*, another Mediterranean musical tradition based in dance that

emphasizes models that are other from those predominant in mainstream culture.[46] We say this because, as musical scholars such as Gianfranco Salvatore have shown, the integration of sounds across the Mediterranean not only spans across cultures that have traditionally been grouped under the "European" umbrella but also moves diachronically and synchronically to embrace exchanges with the cultures of the Near East and Islam (as well as the Caribbean and marginalized Black America). And just like *flamenco* was a cultural movement of resistance that brought together Gypsy, Jewish, and Arab minorities in Spain, so the *taranta* belongs to a tradition that assimilated and consolidated early Dionysian rites[47] with the sounds and dances of the southern peninsula, which owe a debt to Arab culture for the presence of stringed instruments like the *oud* (lute), the *qitar* (guitar), and a variety of tambourines, such as the *adufe*, *pandora*, and *tar*.

Bennato's intent emerges clearly in the song that serves as a manifesto for his new movement, "Taranta Power." Written and released in 1999, it has become one of Bennato's signature songs:

> (Salento dialect)
> Dance dance / as if a tarantula had bit you
> [. . .]
> (Italian)
> The Taranta succeeds when, / touched in the heart by your south /
> [. . .] you lose yourself in the dance;
> [. . .]
> the taranta dies when, / touched in the heart by your south /
> you dance for hours on end /
> [. . .]
> a southern dance, / like a tarantula that touches your heart.

The lyrics, superimposed on a modernly arranged *taranta* rhythm, are not exceedingly subversive or oppositional. However, the song, by opening with a refrain in French and English ("Nineteen ninety-eight / Taranta Power is up to date / [. . .] La tarentule en l'an deux mille / de la champagne est venue en ville"), signals Bennato's desire to confront the main traditions of the northwestern hemisphere on their own grounds, by exiting the *taranta's* provincial and regional boundaries in a progression that brings it to urban and international markets—even as the lyrics perform the didactic role of introducing (Italian and foreign) neophytes to the curative historical and cultural relevance of the dance. The expansion of the *taranta* beyond its regional borders as a means of cultural resistance and imbrication appears more forcefully in a subsequent song, "Frontiere antimusicali," where Bennato underscores that hybridity between musical cultures, whether dominant or subaltern, cannot be contained or regulated by political and programmatic means.

If "Taranta Power" is Bennato's song manifesto for a transnational Mediterranean music, the Neapolitan singer develops his project further during a

second phase, which begins with the 2002 release of the album *Da lontano*. Here, in songs like the already-cited "Frontiere antimusicali" ("this music doesn't remember / whether it comes from the south or if it / comes from the north [. . .] / whether it is illegal or not"), "L'anima persa," "Taranta sound," and especially "Che il Mediterraneo sia," Bennato embraces the at-times utopian ideals of a pan-Mediterranean culture where everyone is on equal footing and no fundamentalisms, whether from the West or the East, gain the upper hand:

> Might the Mediterranean be / the ship that goes alone [. . .]
> Between the northwest wind and the legend / of Flamenco and Taranta, /
> And between algebra and magic [. . .]
> The fortress without gates / [. . .]
> Let's go, let's go to the same party / of music made by different people /
> From a Naples that invents melody / to the drums of Algeria [. . .]
> Sailing between north and south / between east and west [. . .]. ("Che il
> Mediterraneo sia")

The lyrics and instrumental accompaniments that become more explicitly African and Middle Eastern in many of the songs reveal that Bennato, while still following the traditions of southern music, especially the *taranta* and its Neapolitan equivalent, the *tammurriata*, wishes to weave this traditionally southern Italian music with the sounds of the broader Mediterranean basin. While the results are still audibly tied to the *taranta* and its instruments, the interweaving of languages (e.g., French, African Creole, Arabic, and Apulian and Neapolitan dialects) points to a Creolization of his music beyond his previous experimentations.

Bennato's progress from an Italian-centric to a broader perspective becomes even more evident in *Sponda Sud*, a 2007 compilation of old and new songs that, in the title song itself, evinces the political and ideological evolution of his artistic practice. The album, which Bennato has said resulted from the discovery of the interrelatedness between the southern shores of the Mediterranean, superimposes rhythms from the Maghreb and sub-Saharan Africa onto the still pervasive *taranta* and *tammurriata* rhythms that are a constant presence in his music. Here, the message is more clearly oppositional, revealing a growing awareness of the role that he and his music play in the arena of Italian and Mediterranean geopolitical culture:

> I believe that we are facing a head-on confrontation with a culture that tends
> to overwhelm. It is the culture of the multinationals whose tendency is to
> impose everything on others, starting with music [. . .] Therefore, it creates
> a global flattening that is incredibly dangerous for humanity. Countries like
> our South can respond with their great tradition. I believe that, both because
> of existing affinities and because of the compactness of the project, the Medi-
> terranean is a strong alliance, because it is a natural outlet, a meeting place for
> us: Thus Mediterranean alliance means creating an oppositional music that is

a new synthesis, a powerful counter to Anglo-Saxon multinationals. (Longo, "Intervista a Eugenio Bennato")

Bennato's beliefs have thus evolved to match those of philosophers, sociologists, and cultural anthropologists for whom the Mediterranean *as* the South is understood no longer simply as an impediment to Western "progress" but as one of its viable alternatives. Bennato's choice of words (e.g., "affinities," "strong alliance," "oppositional music that is a new synthesis") suggests that he has moved to a new phase of his thinking that showcases what Michael Cronin has called "microcosmopolitanism," whereby intellectuals and artists from smaller and less powerful polities can "circumvent the terminal paralysis of identity logic not through a programmatic condemnation of elites ruling" from the West "but through a patient undermining of conventional thinking from below" (Cronin 16–17). By situating difference, diversity, exchange, and synthesis at the microlevels of society, microcosmopolitanism challenges globalizing cultural forces, allowing change to occur from below upward, while incorporating and deterritorializing their structures (ibid.). So the "southern shores" of the title song signify not only the Italian South but also all the (southern) shores that share with the Mediterranean the status of the other of globalization.

This broader and more combative stance reappears in "Ogni uno," a song that balances the need for common southern goals of resistance in the Mediterranean with the desire to maintain intact the dignity of the individual against homogenizing market impulses that flatten human experiences into easily one-size-fits-all categories. (The phrase *no global* is sung in English in the original; the rest of the lyrics are sung in Italian but have been translated here.)

> No global the music and the African sand [. . .]
> No global the tammurriata [. . .]
> No global this song that belongs to this heart / and therefore can never /
> be repeated the same way again. /
> No global this song that belongs to the brigand / and therefore, /
> though it might tour the world, / will never be global.

In the song, the process of hybridization is still actively pursued both instrumentally, through the juxtaposition of the *taranta* rhythms with the North African percussion sounds, and textually, as five different languages (Arabic, English, French, Italian, and Neapolitan) alternate throughout the rest of the song to decry the limits of globalization. More interestingly, at the level of content, the song strikes a chord for the individuality of the subject even within the *métissage* of sounds and traditions brought together by Bennato, in opposition to those forces that wish to flatten precisely the specific relevance not only of the subject but also of those traditions that they co-opt and corrupt. The result is an anthem-like song that, in the anaphoric repetition of "no global," summarizes Bennato's dedication to the specificity of the

Italian South and to the Mediterranean as a unifying sea where connections and dialogue, not submission, are the cards to play against globalizing trends.

Within southeastern Italian music, a similar approach emerges in the music of the band Sud Sound System. Originating in the Salento region of Italy, the band chose musical rhythms that are only nominally tied to the *pizzica* and *taranta* explored by Bennato. Sud Sound System preserves very little of the musical desire we find in Bennato for tradition. However, it, too, embodies a version of Cronin's microcosmopolitanism, as its music superimposes a variety of musical registers onto local notions of difference. In its first recordings, Sud Sound System juxtaposed antiauthoritarian lyrics onto music that fused and hybridized regional instrumentation with other world music. (It is not by chance that these recordings were produced with the support of the leftist newspaper *il manifesto*.) The opening bars/sounds of the song "Afro Ragga Taranta Jazz" from the 1996 album *Comu na petra* are emblematic of this fusion (the originals are in the dialect of the Salento, the southeasternmost area of Apulia): "Afro ragga taranta jazz can above all give me a base / [. . .] /Walk with me and think for yourself, because I think for myself and walk with you." The song's opening bars employ the tambourine sounds that are traditional of the Salento region. As opposed to their use in Bennato's album *Brigante se more*, here the tambourines never gain the kind of rhythmic ascendancy we would expect and fade in the background, overpowered by the rhythms of reggae, rap, and hip-hop, even as the song connects these musical expressions to the Salento dialect and to themes that, later in the song, question mainstream economic and social practices in Italy.

This continued insistence on thematic more than musical dissonance distinguishes Sud Sound System from most rap imitators in Italy, who parrot the rhythms but not some of the subversive content of their American counterparts. For one, the members of the group choose to juxtapose and superimpose on each other rhythms that extend beyond rap and hip-hop to include the realm of the Caribbean, a cognate region to the Mediterranean in its fusion of sounds and themes from a variety of traditions.[48] Additionally, Sud Sound System prefers to engage social and cultural themes tied to regional and local concerns, such as unemployment, immigration, the *questione meridionale*, and the political corruption of the countryside. Finally, in a true return to tradition, the group's focus on the *performative* nature of their music harks back to the most basic elements of *tarantismo* even when the music itself only echoes its sound. As the group member "Treble" once explained, "it's music as catharsis, and it joins *tarantismo's* rhythm with the sound of Sud Sound System and our posse. We imagine the sound to be therapeutic, helping to free one's self from internal ills and transmit positive energy to others. The women who were overcome by the disease took part in the ritual, shaking, and in that way freed themselves from the masculine culture and from the absurd and difficult conditions of agricultural labor. Mix that with a bit of modernity and you have Sud Sound System" (cited in Sciorra). The group, then, seeks in the crossover between Mediterranean

and international alternative sounds the kind of fusion that renders global the particularity of the Salento and the South. Interposing and mixing them together, as Bennato attempts to do at a more "traditional level" with the *taranta* and the flamenco, Sud Sound System embodies another facet of the "glocalization" we had already seen at play in the music of Pino Daniele, Almamegretta, and 99 Posse. Indeed, their reliance on Caribbean and American musical expressions to represent the local condition of a minority culture suggests a reliance on transnational networks that contains, within it, the power to subvert, or at least critique, dominant models. "Le radici ca tieni," Sud Sound System's most celebrated song, might serve as apt apology for their style of cross-cultural hybridization:

> (Salento dialect)
> We are Salentini, citizens of the world,
> rooted in the Messapi, with the Greeks and Byzantines,
> joined, today, through this style, with the Jamaicans.
> [. . .]
> I come from the Salento and when I answer I speak in dialect,
> [. . .] and if I stop to think I speak in tight Jamaican.

As in their other lyrics, the tambourines of the region introduce a song that, starting on a single vocal phrase, develops in a mixture of rap and reggae. Meanwhile, the words convey the ambitious message of the band: not only a contemporary cross-cultural fusion with other musical forms of expression but also a diachronic desire to tie their experimentation and hybridity to the ancient worlds of the Messapi (ancient tribe of the Salento region), the Greeks, and the Byzantines, societies open to exchanges that contributed to their growth and development. In their songs, this openness to hybridization becomes a two-way street whereby a microculture learns from and finds commonality with other world cultures at the same time that it preserves its own experience of difference as a valuable means of interpretation. The openness with which Sud Sound System integrated different musical currents within and without the boundaries of the Mediterranean points to, in a return to our opening argument, the commonality of southern marginal cultures. As a representation of a discourse *from* the Mediterranean, it points, maybe more than Bennato's already innovative fusion, to the melding and deterritorialization of geographically specific rhythms into new forms that, while undeniably local, subvert any attempt to set boundaries, a mode of experience that is truly Mediterranean in the historical power of the sea between lands to Creolize and meld experiences.

An Introduction to Cinema by Way of a (Musical) Coda: L'Orchestra di Piazza Vittorio

Music hybridity of the type we have been discussing is central to *L'Orchestra di Piazza Vittorio*, a documentary directed by Agostino Ferrente and released

in 2006 that subtends a deep-seated resistance to political discourses that are based on spurious claims to ethnic, racial, and cultural purity. The documentary narrates the events and travails that led to the creation of the homonymous multicultural orchestra in Rome. Born out of the resourcefulness of Mario Tronco (keyboard player for the popular group Avion Travel), Ferrente, and the "Apollo 11" committee, the orchestra was conceived to save the last standing cinema theater in the Esquilino neighborhood of Rome, the Cinema Apollo, from conversion into a bingo hall. Ironically, as the director points out, the decay of the Cinema Apollo parallels, in the eyes of many Romans who abandoned the neighborhood, the transformation of the neighborhood itself, from one that after unification housed the families of Piedmontese state bureaucrats transferred from Turin to the new capital of Rome into one occupied by the Chinese and their "mafia" (in cahoots with Italian underground organizations) and by the multitude of out-of-luck drug addicts, immigrants, and prostitutes who gravitate toward this area from the nearby Stazione Termini, Rome's main train station. As such, the neighborhood and its centrally located Piazza symbolically reproduce the displacement of the vision of nationhood originating out of Romantic notions of identity and (unified) culture at the hand of the new chaotic, mixed, multicultural society that Italy has become.

Ferrente and Tronco's project is political from the get-go. The opening scenes of the movie, during which Ferrente explains the desire to create a multiethnic orchestra to represent the different nationalities and ethnicity now inhabiting Piazza Vittorio, are juxtaposed with shots of political rallies by anti-immigration parties (we see banners that say "Piazza Vittorio per gli Italiani," or "Piazza Vittorio for Italians," as voices spew vitriol on the corruption of societal mores by foreigners) and proimmigrant forces (who we hear condemn the harshness of the Bossi-Fini law of 2002).[49] The documentary itself, by showing the difficult living conditions of many foreign musicians tracked and courted by Tronco, sympathizes and embraces the plight of these immigrants, even as it narrates the main story, which is about finding, organizing, and preparing musicians from a variety of musical traditions to perform the concerts that will raise the money to save the Cinema Apollo. In the end, through the representation of the vicissitudes experienced by the group leading up to its first (successful) public performance, what emerges is the power of music to bring together people of different beliefs and geographic origins.

The orchestra's initial purpose was to provide a forum and give an audience to the multicultural musical sounds of the "new" Rome and, by extension, Italy. Indeed, the first concert focused on music and rhythms from the diverse cultural backgrounds of its members, though, significantly, Western rhythms were excluded from the first performance, even as Western-born musicians and instruments were included in the orchestra.[50] As part of this fusion project, Tronco arranged the performance so that instruments and musicians participated in traditions different from their own in a process of adaptation and cooperation that melded together

instruments as varied as the *cajon* (Andean percussion), *cimbalom* (Roma strings), counterbass, *djembe* (West African percussion), *oud* (North African strings), *siku* (Andean winds), *tabla* (Indian percussion), and *zither* (Indian strings), with melodies often based on melismatic cantillation (Moroccan singers), nonsensical sounds (Ecuadorian), and festive rhythms (Indian vocalists). While one tradition obviously dominates each piece's performance by the orchestra, the participation of traditions extraneous to the original piece contaminates, enriches, and transforms the whole, symbolically rendering the surplus that collaboration produces through the meeting of difference.[51]

As a coda to the coda, and as a way to lead into the next chapter, following the release of the movie, the orchestra, Ferrente, and Tronco gained wide popularity in Italy, and especially abroad, where the movie was widely distributed and praised as a symbol of Italy's new multicultural society. Ferrente and Tronco also came under fire for, as critics like Paul Ginsborg have claimed, giving a paternalistic representation of the other wherein the other does not participate in the decision making and must perform "as he is told to" by the dominant (Italian) culture of music and camera. In an interview with Clarissa Clò, Ferrente took exception to this representation and thus replied to a similar critique by the interviewer ("yours is a multicultural project about immigration in Italy with Italians at its centre [. . .] When will we see an immigrant director making films in Italy?"):

> There are already immigrant directors and writers [. . .] There are social, economic, political obstacles, of course, but Italians have to deal with them as well. In the credits at the end of the film [. . .] I also included myself and Mario Tronco as an ironic gesture, but also to underline the fact that we are immigrants too. I am from Cerignola and Mario is from Caserta where *Gomorra* is set. We also have lived directly or indirectly the history of immigration and [. . .] have experienced racism, separations from our family, precarious living conditions [. . .] One should be more pragmatic and less theoretical on some of these issues. We did not want to have quotas, we did not want to fall prey of multicultural rhetoric, choosing whom we needed for the orchestra based on the colour of their skin in order to show integration. I am interested in smart ideas, regardless of who has them. (Clò 216)

Ferrente's reply provides an apt summary for the perspective we have delineated in this chapter. Although broadly viewed as "Italians" by members of the cultural elite, Ferrente and Tronco's southern origins are crucial for their understanding of music and immigrant music in particular. Operating *from* this southern perspective, they are able to create an orchestra and its music side by side with the immigrant musicians. At the same time, they are aware that in the cultural panorama in which they operate, they have a privileged voice that allows them to speak, produce, and fundraise for those who, for a variety of reasons, do not have the means to do so on their own behalf. In this work *on* and *from* the borders of official (Italian, Western)

culture, they use their privileged position as southern intellectuals to represent not only the peninsula's own historical and geopolitical "difference in equality" but also the cultural difference in otherness (the "glocal," so to speak) that can offer alternative models for a truly contemporary and multicultural Italy.

Screening the Souths through Southern Eyes

Revisiting Italy and the Mediterranean through the Lenses of Globalization

In this chapter, we focus on Italian cinema from the 1980s onward. Although a brief discussion of the cinematic traditions that precede it—notably, neorealism, comedy, and docufiction—is in order, our analysis explores the work of a limited number of directors who vividly express the tension between Western and Mediterranean imagining. While many more have participated in these representations (and we will reference their filmography), those we discuss enable us to cover a wide gamut of perspectives vis-à-vis this geophilosophical tension. Daniele Ciprì and Franco Maresco, for example, screen the horrors of modernization and its corrupted developments in postapocalyptic images of the island of Sicily. Gianni Amelio and Matteo Garrone are equally critical of the disappearance of values enacted by modernization and the concomitant loss of difference between northern and southern cultures. Edoardo Winspeare, instead, strives to recover the fragments of the cultural traditions of the Salento region after its devastating encounter with globalized modernity. Likewise, Emanuele Crialese brings to light the sites and locations of cultural traditions and forms of knowledge that have survived Western epistemologies; while at times he teeters toward idealized representations, he also reminds viewers of a Mediterranean existence marked by emigration and immigration as well as natural and social upheavals.

The Mediterranean of Neorealism, Comedy, and Docufiction

A discussion of Italian cinema *from* the South cannot but acknowledge the influence of neorealism on Italian cinema in the post–World War II years, as directors such as Vittorio De Sica, Roberto Rossellini, and Luchino Visconti lay claim to an accurate representation of the day-to-day plight of Italians during and after the war through strategies ranging from the casting of nonprofessional actors and on-location shooting to unobtrusive camerawork enabled by long takes, deep-focus photography, reduced editing, and so on.[1] However, a closer analysis of these films evinces issues in how directors like Rossellini and Visconti relate to the South whenever it becomes central to their representation. In light of a thought *from* the South, their work reveals biases similar to those demonstrated by postwar anthropologists and ethnographers in their studies of Mediterranean societies. Visconti's *La terra trema* (1948), an adaptation of Giovanni Verga's novel *I Malavoglia*, for example, depicts the village of Acitrezza as the embodiment of a backward and superstitious society. Visconti's desire to narrate the demise of 'Ntoni and his family from an objective, realistic, and quasi-scientific viewpoint (which includes shooting the film in black and white and using Sicilian dialect) contributes to distancing the viewer from the events while highlighting a lifestyle that has remained unchanged for centuries (as the narrative voiceover reminds us) and reproducing the illusion of a static, ahistorical society stuck in the repetition of habits, rituals, and superstitions. Although Visconti attempts to frame the story within the context of 'Ntoni's rebellion against the usurpation of labor by profiteering wholesalers, the main character's ultimate failure and return to a subordinate position vis-à-vis his employers contributes to strengthening the sense of immutability in the mores and relationships between social elements within the village.

Rossellini offers similar renditions of the static nature of southern life in the early episodes of *Paisà* (1946)—one about the allied invasion of Sicily and the other about their occupation of Naples during the war. More problematic still are his depictions of the South in *Stromboli terra di Dio* (1950), and *Viaggio in Italia* (1954). Here, the contrast between northern foreign visitors, who represent a more complex and financially evolved world, and the Sicilian and Neapolitan people reinforces stereotypes of the Italian South and its poorer citizens. *Stromboli* narrates the difficulties that the Lithuanian Karin encounters after meeting the Italian soldier Antonio in a camp for war fugitives and marrying him to escape her captivity. When they move to the island of Stromboli, where Antonio lives and works as a fisherman, Karin finds herself oppressed by her husband's expectations that she be a demure and submissive wife and by the persistent and judgmental gaze of the villagers, who examine her every move according to their expectations of women's behaviors. As a result, and because Rosselini's neorealist camera depicts a landscape of aridity, strife, and poverty, the viewer embraces Karin's viewpoint that life in Stromboli, and by extension in Italy's South, is traumatic

and backward and that the local populations are anchored figuratively and literally to a life of hardship and poverty.[2]

Viaggio in Italia more traditionally sets up the North-South dichotomy from the perspective of the Grand Tour we have already discussed in Chapter 2. Here, as a married couple travels to Naples to sell a villa it has inherited, the husband and wife become enmeshed in a world distant light-years from the English one they have left behind. Having gone through their own personal version of the Grand Tour (i.e., visiting the national museum, Capri, and the ruins of Pompeii) and unable to reconcile diverging views pertinent to both geographical displacement[3] and personal estrangement, Katherine and Alex Joyce agree to divorce. In the crucial final scene, however, their car becomes stuck in a ritual procession in the streets of Pompeii. After Alex once more demonstrates his dislike for the primitive traditions of the locals ("How can they still believe in these superstitions?" he asks in response to the throng's crowding around the ritual statue), the two become separated by the push of the people. The isolation they feel once the (superstitious) southern crowd tears them apart is enough for them to seek each other, reaffirm their love, and stand together in an embrace that shields them from their other. The conclusion leaves little to be imagined with regard to the message conveyed by the film: while Naples and the South can be picturesque and charming purveyors of culture (in the past), the present-day populations, with their backward traditions and mob mentality, have become the other of the West—an other that is to be feared and avoided.

As the neorealist impulse receded, representations of the South developed along two main interpretive channels. On the one hand was what we might call the "comedy Italian-style" strand: films that, playing on stereotypes of Italy's South, either lampoon or use them as a social critique of its institutional, political, and cultural shortcomings. Among these are *Divorzio all'italiana* (1961); and *Sedotta e abbandonata* (1964), by Pietro Germi; as well as a number of films by Lina Wertmüller, such as *Mimì metallurgico* (1972); *Travolti da un insolito destino* (1974); and *Pasqualino Settebellezze* (1975).[4] Each of these films ridicules and criticizes mores relating to honor, chauvinism, crime, political backwardness, and the Mafia, essentializing southern culture through broad and stereotypical strokes. On the other hand, a much more serious approach to crime and the Mafia is central to the second strand of moviemaking about the South—one that is closely related to the genre of docufiction, known in Italy as *film-inchiesta* (investigative film). The standard-bearer for this genre was the Neapolitan Francesco Rosi, who, between 1962 and 1979, directed no less than six films that attempt to reconstruct and detail the collusion between Italian and southern politicians and organized crime in Naples and Sicily. Among the films we must mention are *Salvatore Giuliano* (1962), *Le mani sulla città* (1963), *Il caso Mattei* (1972), *Lucky Luciano* (1974), and *Cadaveri eccellenti* (1976), as well as *Cristo si è fermato a Eboli* (1979), a film that reprises neorealist themes in adapting Carlo Levi's memoir by the same title.[5]

These representations throughout the 1970s and 1980s provided fairly negative views of the South as a whole. At times, they were reminiscent of the arguments proffered by Grand Tour visitors on the backwardness of the southern type. At others, they seemed congruent with northern Italian and Western disparagements of the South as a cultural and economic black hole, as meridionalist essentialism and critiques of economic policies meant to benefit the *Mezzogiorno* intersected racist and pseudoscientific, sociocultural stereotyping of the region and of the Mediterranean. Though many directors wished to highlight entrenched weaknesses in southern social, political, and cultural structures with the goal of undermining them, they often overemphasized their presence, which resulted in representations that were overly negative and reinforced those self-same stereotypes they were meant to criticize.

A different strand of films about the Italian South—one that continues to exert its influence today (e.g., *Benvenuti al Sud* [2011])—developed in the opus of directors *from* the South in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Just as faith in Italy's political and social institutions was eroding (with the scandals of *Tangentopoli*, or "bribe city," that led to the fall of the First Republic)[6] and parties like the Lombard League were promoting ethnic and racist agendas based on the federalist separation of the "productive" North from the "lazy" South, these directors—most clearly, Giuseppe Tornatore and Gabriele Salvatores, whom critic Goffredo Fofi derisively labeled "Tornatores" (cited in Marrone 7)—released films whose vision of the South differed in fundamental ways from those of previous moviemakers. These directors offer representations of the South brimming with nostalgia. In this vision, the South emerges as a mythic land of innocence, where human beings, because of either their youth (as is the case with the protagonist of *Nuovo cinema paradiso* [1988])[7] or their inherent good nature (as is suggested by the goodwill of the Italian soldiers in *Mediterraneo* [1991]),[8] live in harmony with the landscape, each other, and other ethnic groups. The films rely on stunning camera shots of landscapes and sea to drive home the point that the Mediterranean and its south belong to a primordial, Eden-like geography that counters the stresses of the contemporary, globalized world (i.e., the South as Club Méditerranée). The South thus becomes the site of ultimate escapisms, an avoidance-laden land that metaphorically allows the viewers to escape from the harsh economic, political, and cultural realities of contemporary Italy. As a result, these films provide far-from-accurate representations of the South. Rather than balancing and rendering centrally the social, political, and cultural issues that the contemporary South must face, they sweep them under the rug and reduce the complexity of the region to vignettes and simplifications.

The panorama of cinema from the South has recently broadened. The approval of "Agenda 2000" by the European Union's meeting in Berlin (1999), while directed toward the economic development of underutilized agricultural regions in the European Union, has had an unintended corollary effect in Italy. Italy's then minister of the treasury, Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, decreed that the Department of Development receive six times the funds

it had been given under previous governments. His own undersecretary, Gianfranco Micciché, then instructed the director of the Department of Development, Alberto Versace, to explore collaborations with the Ministry of Culture, through which underdeveloped regions be given extra funds for initiatives that would increase the visibility of these regions in all areas of development, including culture. Versace's genius was to create *Sensi contemporanei*, an organization that took funds and, rather than use them to finance infrastructures, disbursed them toward initiatives and events promoting contemporary art, urban beautification, and, not lastly, regional cinema *from* the South (regional administrations eventually took over the disbursement of funds for these initiatives) (Cimino 44). Not surprisingly, the past few years have seen an exponential increase in movies shot and produced in the South that render the complexity of issues tied to identity and geopolitics as they are currently experienced in these regions (Conti and Fonio 15–19).[9]

Ciprì and Maresco: Cynical Visions of the Postapocalyptic South

Even before the Ministry of Development made the promotion of regional culture central to its mission, a number of filmmakers were actively promoting new ways of representing southern regions in contrast to the nostalgic views of the South as paradise that we outlined earlier. Chief among them are the Sicilian duo of Daniele Ciprì and Franco Maresco, whose portrayal of southern urban disaffection is *sui generis* in the panorama of Italian cinema. More than other contemporary directors, they provide a "factional," documentarian view of Sicilian life that escapes easy definitions by screening the horrors visited on the island by the direct encounter with globalization and, somewhat less centrally, its corrupted developments through the Mafia.

To appreciate their cinema, one needs to remember what happened with the neocapitalist liberalization of television airwaves in the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s, as most broadcasting companies underwent a watering down in their cultural programming that had dire consequences for the content offered daily to the viewing public. For one, televised programs began to replicate each other in cookie-cutter fashion, focusing on game shows, soap operas, and *telenovelas* that had little redeeming value aside from the objectification of human beings and their relationships, while inducing materialistic desires and superficial concerns. Concomitantly, news reporting became less about the news and more about the news as fetish: what mattered were sensationalistic approaches to gathering information that, in ever-increasing circles of degradation, focused on scoops and jarring image gathering at the expense of decency, in-depth analysis, and the ethical treatment of the news. The result was a commercialization of television and news media: as the goal of private broadcasting became more and more the bottom line (in a cutthroat game of staying alive in hypercompetitive markets), programming and reportage became more and more slanted toward treating the object of the reporter's gaze, be it in shows, storytelling, or news, as a

fetish that was valuable only inasmuch as it allowed its exploitation in the moment. Once journalists and news channels had achieved their intended goal (i.e., capturing audiences), media objects were promptly discarded—or discontinued, in the case of television shows and series—and replaced by the latest fad or scoop, as they became empty simulacra that no longer satisfied the media's and the increasingly desensitized audience's need for novelty and titillation.[10]

Ciprì and Maresco's cinema took this neocapitalist media phenomenon, which appropriately garnered the appellation of "trash TV," as its point of departure. The two Sicilian directors, in fact, built on the dehumanization of representations in the realms of the visual and the news to the point of absurdity by caricaturing both the subjects of their cinematic gaze and, self-critically, the styles of reportage prevalent during these years (Roberti 106–107). The shorts they produced for television (originally under the header "Cinico TV," or "Cynical TV") became extended parodies of mainstream television programming: not only did they criticize the commercialization of the airwaves, but they also questioned the staleness of modes of representation in Italian cinema and visual media, while providing implicit and explicit critiques of social, political, and cultural mores prevalent in Italy during those years. In doing so, they exposed the periphery (understood geographically but mentally and culturally as well) of Sicilian society and Palermo itself, at a time when the Mafia had most directly exercised its power in defiance of the state (with the murders of chief Mafia prosecutors Giovanni Falcone and Paolo Borsellino in 1992[11] and the terrorist-style bombings near art venues in Florence and Rome in 1993)[12]: "They proposed landscapes of rubble and clouds—the ruin of history and the beauty of creation—and of subhuman people, larvae or leftovers of undone humanity, lost in their aphasia or in their internal growling, caught in their maniacal loneliness or even less than primary needs [. . .] They revealed in a comic manner, through paradox and truth, the 'behind the mirror' of a humanity that had reached the end of the line, the advent of the post-human" (Fofi 338).

"Cinico TV" was particularly effective because it rested its "cynical" gaze on stock characterization that allowed for critiques of human types and because, through cinematic and unorthodox interviewing techniques, often relayed over a background of jazz music that highlighted the improvisational nature of their reportages,[13] it underscored to the point of distortion the excesses of contemporary Italian television and society. For example, the recurring interviews with Pietro Giordano, an out-of-luck beggar who, from one short to the next, becomes a turd, condom, mouse, bomb, and so on, serves to highlight, in the insistence of the interviewing technique (the offscreen voice of Maresco) and Giordano's at times frustrated and at times resigned answers, the excesses of news reportage that does not stop at anything to gain a scoop with which to shock its audience. In a different context, the sixty-something-year-old Francesco Tirone (whom Maresco constantly needles by mistakenly claiming he is over seventy years old) is a cyclist who at times is a static or moving element of the scenery, at other times

expatiates eloquently on a variety of subjects, and at other times yet becomes the masked, costume-clad "Mafia Man," a paladin of the Mafia who intervenes regularly to punish rightful owners or defenseless victims on behalf of the criminal organization. Other recurring characters that also turn up in the directors' full-length features—Carlo Giordano, Giovanni Lo Giudice, and Marcello Miranda—contribute to the overall critique of a social structure centered around traditional Sicilian society that is falling apart and cannot rid itself of the apocalyptic corruption in which it has become mired after years of poor government and Mafia corruption.

If these characterizations were not sufficient, the directors reproduce, to the level of absurdity, the formulaic discourse that talk shows, news announcers, and television personalities model to the point of voiding it of semantic meanings. As Gianni Canova demonstrates, the exchanges between interviewer and interviewee on mainstream news channels are deconstructed when Maresco adopts them to talk with Pietro Giordano's various incarnations as the omnivorous camera's fetishistic object of attention—or when, in interviewing Pietro's relative Carlo, they are interjected with such speed and vehemence from the off-camera voice that they render the interviewed subject speechless and unable to express himself,[14] thus caricaturing the emptiness of these exchanges in talk and game shows, where presenters used them simply to rid themselves of dismissed contestants on their way to the next "victim" (Canova 13–14).

What makes Ciprì and Maresco's critique relevant to our discourse *from* and *of* the Mediterranean, however, is the directors' ability to juxtapose and superimpose these absurd characterizations of humanity onto a scenery that has been deprived of most mythologizing residue—Sicily as tourist paradise and as a site of multicultural amalgamation and of mythologized *convivencia*—and exposed, at its most basic level, as a land of real and metaphoric eruptions, destruction, and terrifying beauty.[15] Thus, soon after a "Cinico" sketch that depicts a cruise ship passing by the Sicilian coast, two characters walk on a beach covered with detritus and trash, a not-so-subtle reminder of what is left behind by the ship's passage. Significantly, the trash and detritus left behind by consumerist society are never far from Ciprì and Maresco's camera consciousness, appearing repeatedly in the periphery of Palermo, on roads covered with rubble, and in homes lacking any appearance of sanitary conditions (Morreale 19).

The Sicilian directors' critique of their geopolitical world, but also of contemporary television and cinema as they have been voided of meaning,[16] becomes even more poignant in their full-length features, where traditional narrative structure (which often appears to connect episodes or characterizations in "Cinico TV") has been despoiled of its value or rendered so obsolete as to be incongruous to the viewers. Through their choice of subject matter (e.g., deformed humans; contrasts between ultramodern constructions and deserted or destroyed peripheries; depiction of excessive and deviant human behaviors—characters who vomit on the cameras, grossly overeat, or perform bestiality with a variety of animals) and filmic techniques (e.g., extended

close-ups and foregrounding to the point of discomfiture; long shots that expose human beings to the belittling aridity and isolation of the scenery), they have highlighted the tragic impact that modernization and popular culture have had in trivializing and rendering insignificant the lives of those who are first exploited "and ultimately abandoned by the political and economic ruthlessness of late capitalism" (Hope 105).

Their full-length features—*Lo zio di Brooklyn* (1995), *Totò che visse due volte* (1998), *Il ritorno di Cagliostro* (2003), and *Come inguaiammo il cinema italiano* (2007)—explore the decay of Sicilian culture and society through the representation of different cultural icons and provide a devastating indictment of the effects of modernity on the Sicilian people. *Lo zio di Brooklyn* opens with a character who tells the viewers that the film's goal is to show Palermo from a different perspective than the prevailing stereotyped one they have come to expect of a city where cultural contaminations have produced an intriguing and wonderfully diverse urban center. Gone are the architectural splendors and cultural icons of the old city; gone is its syncretic history. Instead, the film is bookended by scenes of death and resurrection, as it narrates the life of a dispossessed urban periphery in the throes of territorial fights for power between the mysterious "Uncle" with his two midget henchmen and the local Mafia boss who cannot rid himself of their presence. On the margins of this power struggle, but central to the film's narration, are characters (e.g., sexual predators; a seminaked gourmand who shares his copious meals with a pack of dogs; the bicycle rider who navigates in and out of the narration, first with his bicycle and then in search of it after another midget steals it) who expose the madness of the Sicilian periphery at a time when this periphery had become the site of devastating Mafia wars between urban and country bands. The result is a hyperironic (and surreal) indictment not only of modernity and capitalism in a southern geopolitical climate but also of the way media has itself become corrupted:

> The film is characterized by an atmosphere of impending apocalypse [. . .] The local *Mafiosi*, now dressed in white robes, cluster together as in their previous life, and other characters also repeat their behavior patterns as mortals. While constituting a forceful visual metaphor implying that everyone will spend eternity in the same miserable way as they lived their lives [. . .] the *mise-en-scène* of the sequence gives a more tangible sense of the post-postmodern abyss that viewers have occasionally been forced to behold earlier in the film [. . .] These eternal signifiers of Sicilian life, now permanently detached from the signified, arguably constitute the last mirages of the real, immortalized against overexposed, empty nothingness. (Hope 114–115)

Their next feature-length film, *Totò che visse due volte*, revolves around three episodes, constructed as a medieval triptych, that reconstruct, in a postapocalyptic Sicilian environment, the events that lead to the crucifixion of two robbers who, in theory, will be joined on the cross by Totò, the Jesus-like character, at film's end. But Ciprì and Maresco, in keeping with their

cynical and deconstructive analysis of religion as well as of society, show that the two thieves are victims of a system that oppresses the marginalized and thus become the true Christ figures in this cosmic vision: one is a sexually frustrated but harmless man who lands on the receiving end of the village's hatred (Morreale 22); the other is a materialist who begins a homosexual relationship to access his lover's wealth, even if it means being insulted, beaten, and degraded by the lover's family. Totò/Jesus himself cannot take his place on the cross in the last episode, as his body has been dissolved in a pool of acid by his alter ego, Totò the Mafia boss.[17] Totò/Jesus thus leaves his place on the cross to the local sex maniac who, throughout the film, has engaged in sexual acts with angels, animals, men, and even a statue of the Virgin Mary.[18]

If *Lo zio di Brooklyn* "narrated the end of the world" and *Totò che visse due volte* narrated "the end of God," the directors' subsequent work, both in shorts and in the feature-length films *Il ritorno di Cagliostro*[19] and *Come inguaiammo il cinema italiano*, "narrates the end of art in the third millennium" (Maresco cited in Frappat 56). These movies become more self-referential, even as they reveal how art itself, commercialized and politicized, when not utterly corrupted by the Mafia's infiltrations, has been emptied of its social functions, treating its subject matter and its protagonists as objects to be exploited. The latter is most clearly evinced by the 1999 short *Enzo, domani a Palermo!*, a mock documentary that details the shady dealings of Enzo Castagna, a Godfather-like impresario who provided extras for film productions based in Sicily (Moller 13), and by *Come inguaiammo il cinema italiano*, which narrates the rise to fame and suspicious connections to organized crime of Franco Franchi, a member of the comic duo *Franchi e Ingrassia*.

Ciprì and Maresco's vision deconstructs, almost melancholically, the world they explore. Yet this exploration and the stark quality of their shooting are never devoid of empathy.[20] In the blunt revelation of the degradation of the landscape and of the human beings who inhabit it, the filmmakers force the viewers to contend with the plight of those who are excluded from the writing of history: "There is still in them, regardless [. . .] an invincible Christian piety, a love for losers and rejects that, rather than constitute their limit, makes them more brotherly and human, allowing us to love them as artists that continuously face the sirens of nothingness and as singers of places, corners, affections that no longer seem to interest the cinema (especially Italian cinema)" (Morreale 32). In exposing the viewers to the despoiled South and the detritus, ugliness, and obscene degradation that globalization, in its economic and mediatic policies, has brought to its people, Ciprì and Maresco are polemically confronting the results that the winner-takes-all philosophy of unfettered progress wreaks on those who live at its margins. As southerners who have witnessed the economic exploitation of Italy's southern regions by unregulated industrial concerns on one hand and hordes of tourists seeking its paradisiacal, unspoiled vacation spots on the other, the directors force us

to take a trip in the back alleys of modernization, behind the edulcorated, touched-up visions that politicians and tourist bureaus wish us to see.

Gianni Amelio: The Other as Us

Empathy toward the dispossessed is also central to the cinema of Calabrian director Gianni Amelio, who, like Ciprì and Maresco, distances himself from the nostalgic representation of the South as idyllic utopia seen in the films of Salvatores and Tornatore. Amelio had worked both in television and in cinema in the years leading to the fall of the First Republic. In the 1990s, following the success of *Porte aperte (*1989), he began choosing and writing his own scripts (Cattini 112). This originality emerged especially in the trilogy of southern-themed films that followed: *Il ladro di bambini* (1992), *Lamerica* (1994), and *Così ridevano* (1998). Each of these films, in a different way, helped to portray Italy's complex relationship with its south in light of the country's changed economic and political role in the Mediterranean and Europe in the years following World War II.

Il ladro di bambini, which from its title establishes ties with Vittorio De Sica's neorealist film *Ladri di biciclette (1948)*, narrates the story of Antonio, a southern *carabiniere* (Italian policeman) who must deliver two children from Milan to a religious orphanage in Rome. The children, an 11-year-old girl exploited by her mother as a prostitute (Rosetta) and a quiet 9-year old boy with attachment issues (Luciano), lead the young man on a journey of self-discovery after they are rejected by the Roman orphanage, ostensibly because the girl lacks a birth certificate but clearly because the director believes the girl will corrupt the other children. Charged with taking the siblings to another orphanage in Gela (Sicily), Antonio delays his mission as he balances his need to lead the children to their final destination and his growing affection toward them. The trip is interrupted when Antonio, having chased and stopped a thief from stealing the camera of two French tourists he and the children had befriended, reports to the local authority. At the police station, rather than commending him for his courage and for having responsibly looked after the children beyond his original mandate, the local officer strips Antonio of his badge on the charge that he appears to have kidnapped the youths but still demands that he deliver them to the orphanage rather than taking them into custody. After driving through the night, Antonio parks the car in the square facing the orphanage and falls asleep. The film ends with a shot of Luciano and Rosetta sitting side by side on the sidewalk, awaiting their future in the orphanage, while Antonio sleeps on having lost them forever.[21]

Central to the film's plot is the contrast between Antonio's personal view of society, which is based on an ethical sense of responsibility toward the other (be they his fellow citizens or the children in his charge), and contemporary society itself, where appearances and bigoted behaviors predominate. Antonio's upbringing in the South is fundamental to his worldview. As a *carabiniere* deployed to the industrial, northern city of Milano, he feels

uncomfortable in the world he has entered (as exemplified by the differ-
ent sense of duty exhibited by the northern colleague who should help him
deliver the children but chooses instead to have a sexual tryst in Bologna,
sending Antonio off to complete the mission by himself), though he exhibits
a similar lack of comfort in a southern world that has abandoned its strengths,
as revealed when he visits his sister at her restaurant and home in Calabria.
When Antonio and the two children participate in festivities associated with
the confirmation ceremonies of local children, the script and Amelio's cam-
erawork underscore the contrast that exists between the traditional world
Antonio has left behind and the corruption of those values by the entrenched
powers that, at the local and national level, have turned the southern coast
into a construction site, where unfinished cement structures and highways to
nowhere dot the once pristine view of the Mediterranean coast.[22] The point
is highlighted by contrasting it with the actions of Antonio's grandmother,
who cultivates her vegetable garden on a plot adjacent to the highway, where
modernity—in the form of cars rushing by and semiconstructed buildings—
looms over her, almost crowding her out of the picture. Yet it is she who,
in a moment of intimacy that escapes everyone but Antonio, is seen ten-
derly passing on her knowledge of the world to Luciano in a gesture of oral
and practical transmission that belongs to her agrarian past. Like Luciano,
Rosetta finds comfort in the warm embrace of this society, as she briefly for-
gets her actual and metaphorical prostitution in the North. Her enjoyment,
however, is short lived, as a local woman, who clearly enjoys the exploitative
news provided by gossip magazines, outs her as the child prostitute glamor-
ized by the media, forcing Antonio's and the children's departure from the
Calabrian village.

At a time when Italian institutions faced unprecedented scrutiny due to
the scandals of *Tangentopoli*, the film reveals how the endemic corruption
of a hyperbureaucratic system leads the only principled adult to be accused
of corruption (the *fabbrica del fango* phenomenon),[23] while the vacuity of
superficial interests and a society focused on appearances sideline and brand
negatively the values of solidarity, compassion, and family embodied by Anto-
nio (Fofi 321). As Amelio has pointed out, it highlights his belief in an Italy
wracked by corruption and superficiality, where "there really isn't a differ-
ence anymore between the South and the North, that everyone is the same
today, and that ugly things happen everywhere" (Crowdus and Georgakas
205). In this cultural and ethical vacuum, "the only optimistic sign is a hand
that holds another one in the moment of defeat or a jacket placed on the
shoulders of a young boy trembling in the cold: the solidarity between those
who are marginalized is the only way to safety" (Cattini 113).

Amelio's next film, *Lamerica*, is the story of a young Italian profiteer
(Gino) who, with his partner, Fiore, tries to swindle the Albanian authori-
ties after the fall of the country's communist regime and the opening of its
borders to external venture capital. When their shady deal falls apart, Gino
is stranded in Albania and progressively infantilized and rendered defenseless
by the loss of the (Western) objects that define his identity. He then finds

himself tied to the Italian man, Michele Talarico (whose alias is Spiro Tozai), whom he and Fiore chose as the figurehead for their business scam, believing him to be a former Albanian dissident. The latter, instead, is a former Italian soldier abandoned in Albania after Italy's World War II defeat, a sad reminder of Mussolini's colonial ambitions (the film's opening sequence underscores this by showing dated newsreels from Italy's 1939 invasion of the country, wherein fascist authorities are seen praising their civilizing mission)—ambitions that are patently juxtaposed to the neocolonial ambitions of the Italian profiteers, even as the Albanians themselves now view Italy as a mythical land of plenty to the West. As Gino and Michele travel through Albania, their roles and perceptions change. Michele, stuck in the fascist era and unaware of the economic boom of the postwar years, joins the Albanians in looking for the utopian land to the west, which he identifies with the America (*lamerica*) where Italians of his generation migrated. Gino, despoiled of the markers that identify him as a Westerner (his cell phone, his SUV, and especially his passport), becomes "Albanian" himself, as he is in no way different from the people with whom he travels. Yet, contrary to his fellow travelers (the Albanians who want to migrate to Italy, and Michele, who wishes to reach America), Gino knows that the capitalist utopia they seek is an empty pipe dream and constantly reminds them that the most they can aspire to is an underpaid black-market job. Nonetheless, despoiled of the arrogance and predatory gaze that had characterized his earlier attitude toward the other, he joins them on their (clandestine) trip across the Adriatic, since only by passing as Albanian can he escape his forced stay in the Balkan country.

Amelio himself has suggested that the key element for interpreting the film is a form of Mediterranean and southern solidarity between Italians and the Albanian refugees who, in the 1990s, landed on the Apulian shores, bringing with them hopes for a better life,[24] as Italians had done in the previous century by mythologizing America as the land of plenty. The director also explains that the American dream of plenty held by the Albanians was based on images culled from Italian television that promoted a distorted view of Italy: "Albania is also the yesterday we have forgotten and murdered. And the real Albania is corrupted not only by the half century of Stalinist dictatorship, but also by the myth of wellbeing 'Italian style' which we have communicated to it through television" (Fofi 321).[25] Thus what the Albanians came to idolize in their desire to find economic well-being was not the real, corrupt Italy that disturbs the social conscience of filmmakers like Amelio but rather the country of veneers and false patinas that Berlusconi-era television programming promotes to Italians and foreigners alike. Having been assaulted, with the opening of the country's mediatic and physical borders, by images of Western-style globalization, the Albanian people in the film are "global consumers [. . .] without products to consume" (Caminati 602). The only way they can bridge the gap between being passive spectators of globalization and active consumers that satisfy the growing hunger of Western capitalism is to cross the Adriatic into the West. In highlighting the paradox of the expectations that Albanians have—of a mythic Italy that does not exist but subsists

on empty visual images—and the parallel fantasies of a mythic America held by Michele Talarico, Amelio succeeds in "denouncing the role played by transnational economic institutions in forcing people to move in desperate search of a better economic situation" (ibid. 603).[26]

Amelio has claimed that the third film of the trilogy, *Così ridevano*, is historically the first.[27] Here, on the foreground of the relationship between two southern brothers who migrate to Turin to find jobs and prosperity in the post–World War II period, the film plays out the themes of Italy's North-South divide and the vexed question of being Italian within this geopolitical construct. The older brother Giovanni moves to Turin to join his younger brother Pietro, who left Sicily to pursue a career as a teacher in the North. Giovanni wants to reconstitute their brotherly bond and works many jobs to pay for his brother's studies, even as Pietro openly rejects him and their humble origins. As the film progresses, it is Giovanni, having risen through the ranks of the working class through legal and illegal means (at one point he becomes an exploiter of other southern immigrants by exacting kickbacks in exchange for help in securing jobs), succeeds in the (northern) Italy of the economic boom. The two brothers eventually reunite, and with Giovanni's support Pietro completes the diploma that qualifies him to teach. But they are permanently separated when Giovanni has a confrontation and stabs another man with whom he has shady dealings. Pietro, who had been following them, decides to take responsibility for the murder (Amelio deliberately leaves this detail ambiguous)[28] and is sentenced to time in a correctional institute. The film ends with Giovanni, now a successful, married man with children, welcoming the defeated Pietro on a supervised visit to his home, before the younger brother, emptied of desire and seemingly out of his mind, leaves to return to his life of imprisonment. Amelio implies, however, that the true loss is Giovanni's. Having arrived in Turin embodying strong commitment to family values, work ethic, and community, his buy-in to the capitalist sirens of the economic miracle have transformed him into an arriviste willing to sacrifice even his brother's future and sanity on the altar of Mammon.

If the three films are Amelio's attempt to discuss the vexed notion of Italian identity from a southern perspective, *Così ridevano* is certainly the "before" of *Il ladro di bambini* and *Lamerica*. The film historicizes a time, the years of the economic boom, when Italy "was yet to be unified and standardized through the Italian spoken on television" and southern migrants to Italy's northern cities lived in an "atmosphere of division and extraneousness felt in the same neighborhood, in the same city," since "many still spoke their dialect (Sicilian or Sardinian, Calabrian or Apulian) as if it were a foreign language, and this in itself was at times a fiercely discriminating factor" (Cattini 154–155). Although they were exploited and often vilified by the industrial businesses of the North, they retained, through their dialects, familial support and traditions—strong bonds to their regional origins that the characters in the most recent films have lost. In reminding the viewers of a time when North/South linguistic and cultural differences were the norm, in contrast with the linguistic and cultural homogenization of present-day Italy,

Amelio underscores both the loss and what might be gained by recovering those values. On the one hand, unfettered capitalism and the "fundamentalism of the rat race" (Cassano, *Southern Thought and Other Essays* 58–60) are presented as strong causes in the dissolution of familial, linguistic, and ethical bonds. On the other, Amelio offers a solution of sorts: those who come to Italy from eastern (and southern) shores might infuse the geopolitical body of the country with many of the same values that Italy has sacrificed during its economic upswing.[29]

Amelio's empathy for marginal cultures and their representatives runs through the films we have analyzed, and as we have suggested, it helps define questions of identity and "Italianness" for the Calabrian director. While *Il ladro di bambini* and *Lamerica* conclude ambiguously, poised between hope and despair, and *Così ridevano* suggests an even more negative appraisal of the effects that capitalism and modernization have had on Italy's own traditional cultures, Amelio remains committed to speaking out and representing difference in his *oeuvre*. This emerges clearly in his most recent film, *Il primo uomo* (2011), a cinematic adaptation of Albert Camus's unfinished novel by the same title (*Le premier homme*). The film portrays the return to Algeria of Jean Cormery, a French-Algerian writer who is a thinly veiled alter ego of Camus himself, during the Algerian war for independence. Through flashbacks into Cormery's past and the depiction of conflicts between Franco-Algerian loyalists, the Algerian Liberation Front, and the *pieds-noirs*[30] who refuse to repatriate to France because their whole life has been spent in Algeria, Amelio renders Cormery's attempts to reconcile his philosophical public pronouncements in favor of the Algerian people's right to self-determination with the brutality of a conflict that, at the personal level, might harm his mother and other relations from his youth years in northern Africa. Though the film does not touch directly on these themes, in representing Cormery/Camus, Amelio suggests a deeper reflection on the role of the intellectual/writer—and we might add the film director himself—in current conflicts between the West and northern African countries as they are playing out across the Mediterranean and in Italy itself. When Cormery/Camus speaks out for the rights of Arab Algerians in the face of French oppression and refuses to claim the superiority of his culture over theirs, we are reminded of Amelio's juxtaposition of southern Italians who migrated to the Americas in the early twentieth century with those who traveled to the industrial North in the post–World War II years and with the destitute Albanians who boarded ships across the Adriatic in the 1990s. Unspoken, but certainly present, is the plight of northern African boat people precariously traversing into Italy in the current millennium. While the director cannot save them, he can represent and honor their struggles. In doing so, and in emphasizing the Mediterranean commonality of their experiences and traditions, he enables the viewers (and himself) to reaffirm those values that contemporary Italy has discarded by the wayside.

Matteo Garrone: The Path to *Gomorra*

A similar focus emerges in the cinema of the Roman director Matteo Garrone, whose most famous film, *Gomorra* (2008), renders fictionally the equally famous and controversial book by Neapolitan journalist Roberto Saviano. Both the film and the book document the extensive and noxious presence of the Camorra in Naples and its hinterland, where its illegal dealings have become magnified by its collusion and collision with globalized economics and its demands.

Garrone's precedent oeuvre consistently renders the social and cultural transformations of Italy in the late twentieth century. From his earliest work in cinema—Garrone was initially a painter—emerges an attention to the problems raised in contemporary Italian society by policies of forced industrialization and capitalization that Italian and Western governments, since the 1950s, have promoted throughout the country. In particular, this outlook dominates the first two films of his "Roman trilogy" (the third, *Estate romana*, shows the disenchantment and alienation that contemporary society causes for a group of Roman actors but does so indirectly, focusing more on the crisis of aesthetic representation in post–First Republic Italy). *Terra di mezzo* (1997) and *Ospiti* (1999) are documentary-like films (or "factions") that set side by side the experiences of clandestine migration and those of Italians who are lost in the contemporary chaos of Italian society.

Terra di mezzo carries in its title the awareness of the cultural role that Italy plays at the turn of the century, as it defines Italy as the inverse geopolitical entity of the Mediterranean (as the sea "in between lands"), a clever reversal of Italy's role as the land in between the Mediterranean's watery expanse. It also marks Italy (as well as Rome and the countryside where the film is shot) as a psychological and ethical "in-between land" where the opposite energies of North/West and South/East meet and globalization and its (southern) other play out these encounters. Given the role that Italy has played in turn-of-the-century migratory patterns from North Africa and the East, the country's in-betweenness highlights its muddled economic and political stances, which extend to its relationship toward the Mediterranean other. Finally, from the perspective of the migrants who have reached Italy to find work and escape wars and political oppression, Italy becomes an in-between land that has mitigated their aspirations and often compromised their values, as they have lost themselves, ironically, in a no-man's-land of illegality and cheapened prospects.

In *Terra di mezzo*, Garrone presents the Italian experiences of three migrant groups: Nigerian women forced into prostitution, representing sub-Saharan Africa; Albanian youths seeking temporary day jobs, as examples of the migration from Eastern Europe; and a self-employed Egyptian *benzinaio* (gas station attendant), who gives voice to migrants from the Maghreb and the southern coast of the Mediterranean. The three groups live at the margins of Italian society as illegal aliens who find niche jobs and adapt to the well-known Italian art of *arrangiarsi* ("figure it out"). The Egyptian man,

in particular, lives off tips he receives from filling gas tanks at a self-service station, where he introduces himself to customers as the night attendant (he wears a green shirt that matches the regularly employed day attendant's but lacks the company logo of the multinational that owns the station). In Garrone's representation, these groups are not just shown from an anthropological perspective as others but are contrasted with Italians whose responses to them range from the bigoted and racist (e.g., the condescending attitude toward the Egyptian man in the third episode) to the accepting and encouraging (most obviously in the second episode, possibly because the other exhibits racial markers, as Eastern European white boys, that are less disturbing to their sense of identity).

Ospiti develops the central episode from the previous film, in which the protagonists were Albanian youths. Garrone chooses two of the boys who acted in that film and even has them move in with the disaffected scion of the Roman bourgeoisie whose mother's home one of them had painted in *Terra di mezzo*. Here, however, Garrone presents a different interaction between the clandestine migrants and the Italian people they meet. As he sets up pairs (Corrado, the young man who hosts the two Albanian cousins, with Ghini, the hardworking, ambitious Albanian youth who must help support his family back home; and Lino, the older Italian man who wanders the streets of Rome trying to protect his demented wife, with Gherti, the Albanian youth who prefers to enjoy life rather than devote himself to work and success), Garrone suggests that, in the dynamics of these interactions, the audience must question the problematic meeting of modern capitalism with traditional values. Thus, while the issues of racism that were central to the previous film occasionally emerge (as they do when apartment owners in Corrado's building demand that he regularize the position of the two Albanian youths or get rid of them, because they do not belong in their posh Parioli building), the film's central question is precisely which values the new Italy must embrace, caught as it is between the economic sectarianism and classism of global capitalism and traditions that center on relationships of mutual understanding between people.

The interactions between the main characters exemplify this contrast. Corrado, a sometimes-photographer who follows no real schedule, is a well-to-do member of the Roman bourgeois who has inherited his wealth and can choose how to pass his time. As such, he does not understand either his girlfriend's dedication to her profession as a veterinarian on the outskirts of Rome or Ghini's serious commitment to his job. Yet, through his laziness and simple *joie-de-vivre*, he reveals an uncanny ability to emote toward his young tenants—especially Ghini—so that, slowly, he draws the latter out and teaches him to enjoy himself more than he would if he only focused on his work and family responsibilities. Instead, Ghini is dedicated to his career advancement: he works hard at his restaurant job and chides his cousin, who quits when the job's demands overwhelm him, a resentment that leads them to go their own ways. Ghini's ultimate objective is to save enough money to open a mechanic's shop in Albania, a goal that is hampered, as he reveals to

Corrado, by the financial demands of his family back home (in home videos he receives, his father constantly reminds him they are all unemployed and depend on him for their survival).

A different dynamic emerges in the relationship between Lino and Gherti. When Lino, an Italian pensioner, meets Gherti on a bus, he tells him that he has worked hard all his life but that he now spends his time looking after his wife, who, in her old age, has lost her mind and insults him all the time. Rather than confine her to the madhouse (Gherti asks him why he does not take her there), Lino prefers to look after her, since she devoted much of her life to him. However, when she eludes his control and disappears, it is Gherti who accompanies Lino on his search and shows the most compassion in aiding his quest, as the authorities and medical personnel at the mental hospital do not seem to care or want to help. And it is Gherti who, at the end of the film, is the only one (Corrado, Ghini, and Lino cannot stomach the evidence) strong enough to identify the drowned body of Lino's wife. In his interactions with Gherti, Lino repeatedly encourages the youth to find a job, advice that Gherti takes halfheartedly as he asks for jobs here and there in his meanderings through Rome. Nonetheless, through their conversations, we discover that Lino wishes he had not devoted his life to his work, because he wasted the opportunity to develop true relationships with those around him. Indeed, during one of their bus rides, he mentors his young Albanian friend to take his time to find his place in society, as if to criticize his own narrow approach to adulthood: "You are young, you can figure it out, you will find a job, you have time to do that." The title of the film, then, certainly refers to the status of the young Albanian boys in their new country. But it also alludes, more problematically, to Italian citizens who are "guests" in the new contemporary Italy, a place that is unfamiliar and in which traditional slowness and enjoyment of life are no longer widely practiced.

L'imbalsamatore (2002), and *Primo amore* (2004), Garrone's subsequent films, more generally depict the decay of Italian society in the new millennium. While the tensions tied to the arrival of immigrant groups to Italy are absent, they depict a society that, from north to south (Monetti 81), is adrift, having embraced an increasingly superficial and materialistic attitude toward human existence and relationships. In *L'imbalsamatore*, for example, the superficial, hedonistic nature of the characters is juxtaposed to the defacement of the landscape that allows such hedonism to thrive unabated. (In a beautifully eerie long shot, Garrone shoots a swath of seemingly pristine seashore in the southern town near Caserta where the two protagonists, Peppino and Valerio, live, only to undermine the Edenic image as the camera leaves the openness of the shore's panorama to zone in on seaside high-rises that have been built illegally by the Camorra.)[31] Similarly, in *Primo amore*, Vittorio's obsession with Sonia's (anorexic) looks is juxtaposed to the cookie-cutter urban landscape of Vicenza's periphery, where rows of similar two-story villas bespeak to the conformity that has invaded Italy's hinterland. Italo Moscati thus summarizes the vision that emerges from these films and that portends to the tragic representation of the Neapolitan periphery in

Gomorra: "*L'imbalsamatore*, crime scene, thus blood, forbidden or daring loves, proximity with the bleak territories of the Camorra, already turned into *Gomorrah*, but not yet baptized in these terms; *Primo amore*, the encounter with a man who wants to de-flesh a woman, metaphor of emotions or of a thinned down, anorexic Italy, in a neighboring Italy that fattens itself on its quiet living and its 'well-being' which reveal themselves as ephemeral every day more so" ("Un filo di gramigna" 61).

Gomorra amplifies and culminates[32] Garrone's exploration of the changes wrought on Italy's social fabric by globalization and its discontents. The film, which fictionalizes Roberto Saviano's journalistic exposé of the Neapolitan Camorra's relationship with power and its infiltration of social and financial networks in the North, weaves together five story lines (either clearly suggested or loosely derived from events in the book)[33] that scathingly indict the South's cannibalizing of its own as it belatedly adapts globalized policies to its already corrupted fabric (a point that, as we have already seen, Gianni Amelio had already made in 1994).[34] In doing so, it renders centrally, like few contemporary films, the contradictions inherent in the imposition of globalizing capitalistic strategies on regions whose cultures have operated according to different cultural, economic, and social exchanges: "The growth of widespread and capillary criminal economies represents the surest and fastest way for many of the world's Souths to establish a foothold in the international economy [. . .] The poisoning of tradition and its recovery through corrupt and predatory models are the price that the frailest societies pay to survive under the new conditions" (Cassano, *Southern Thought and Other Essays* 55). This corruption of traditional interpersonal and economic relationships by the multinationals of crime is clearly on display in *Gomorra*.

In the film, Garrone substitutes Saviano's first-person narration with a weave of five different storylines, some more loosely adapted from the book than others (Crispino 45–48). He also distances the camera from a single point of view (mainly through long-shot ensembles) to create a semblance of objectivity in the portrayal of the events. Finally, he refuses to embrace the glamorized view of Mafia-style criminal organizations, as seen in Hollywood films, by choosing lesser-known actors and a cinematic style—"faction"—that shoots on location with nonprofessional actors (a return to Neorealist techniques), who represent the henchmen of the Camorra (Cavaliere 175–176). The result provides a much harsher view of the impact that criminal organizations have had on Naples and the South as a whole:

[What Garrone presents] is not an x-ray of the executive leadership of the Camorra, which risks replicating the classic iconography of the gangster-film or, even worse, to glamorize the life of its bosses. Instead, he consciously chooses to depict the lowest rungs of the criminal pyramid, monitoring the anthropological and social effects of the System on the skins of so-called *manovalanza*, that vast and undifferentiated group of humble and desperate people (adolescents, women, underpaid and oppressed workers) who, in their existential

condition, are almost deprived of the faculty to choose or even understand with clarity the borders between legality and illegality. (De Sanctis 37)

This is shown deliberately in the sequences that open and conclude the film. In the first, Camorra middlemen are gunned down by a rival gang while hedonistically tending to their looks in a tanning salon. The vanity of the small-time *camorristi*, who are engrossed in the ephemeral beautification of their bodies, resembles that embraced by Italian public figures such as former prime minister Berlusconi himself and suggests the extent to which globalization allows for the year-round pursuit of certain goals (a tan and public appeal) regardless of geographical and meteorological conditions. It also shows the distance that exists between representations that glamorize power and crime in the media (e.g., Hollywood-style Mafia, the selective portrayal of beauty in reality television shows) and the abject, crass reality of henchmen who work for criminal organizations. Garrone drives home the point in the story of Ciro and Marco, the young men who believe they can become independent Camorra contractors in the Neapolitan hinterland. Having modeled their criminal exploits—which include stealing drugs from a group of African dealers as well as appropriating a shipment of Russian Kalashnikov guns owned by a local Camorra boss—on the life of Tony Montana, the Al Pacino character in Brian De Palma's *Scarface*, they run afoul of reality when their fantasy power trip meets the more concrete power of the Camorra bosses whose orders they defied. Their murder, suggestively shot outside a deserted building by the seashore, brings their impossible dream to an end and serves as a critique for the glamorized representations of organized crime in Italian and foreign media fictions.

If *Gomorra* succeeds, in Garrone's own words, in presenting life inside the Camorra "from the point of view of the slaves, not the masters" (cited in Porton 13), it does so because it ties the brutal representation of the Neapolitan hinterland to broader geopolitical and economic forces. Indeed, while a couple of the stories only tangentially connect the Camorra with international drug and gun trafficking, the episodes pertaining to Pasquale, the tailor caught in the crossfire of the territorial fights between clandestine fashion industry clans and Franco and Roberto, the businessmen charged with burying toxic waste from northern Europe in illegal dumping grounds located in the South, underscore more clearly the ties between local crime organizations and the interests of multinational corporations. Pasquale, for example, must eke out a miserable living from his trade (though clearly he is an expert in his field), as northern fashion companies require high-couture clothing on a budget, with a view to maximize their profits. In turn, the middlemen factory owners who bid on the contracts propose impossibly low costs that, in the black market of illegal employment, simply mean below-sustenance pay and unhealthy working conditions. When a competing enterprise set up by the Chinese mafia hires Pasquale to lead its operations—a further example of the globalized nature of international labor—the inevitable confrontation between these criminal organizations

results in the Camorra eliminating its competition. Franco and Roberto, instead, work in the Camorra's toxic waste disposal industry, an industry that in its southern incarnation can only function through intimidation and deceit. Completely unconcerned about the health ramifications his shady deals cause the local populations, Franco introduces Roberto to a world in which the Camorra's *Sistema* (system) sacrifices the health of its own people for the bottom line but where the biggest culprits are northern and Western European interests that have no trouble selling out the southern periphery if the (illegal) solution means greater profits and fewer environmental headaches for them. To his credit, Roberto refuses to play along when he sees the damage wrought on a family's health and the health of its crops by their decision to allow toxic wastes to be buried beneath their land. (In a symbolic scene, underscoring the degraded consideration that peasant hospitality holds for modern business interests, Franco throws away the peaches they were given by an old peasant woman, as he believes them poisoned by soil contamination.) Offended by his employer's attention to the bottom line even as the generosity of the peasants continues unabated despite their exploitation, Roberto quits and is abandoned on the road, the same road that Pasquale makes his own when he decides to become a truck driver and start anew. In this world where friendships and hospitality no longer count and corruption prevails at every level, no words are more fitting as an epigraph to the film than Italo Moscati's: "One cannot breathe in our narrow *gomorra* periphery. And we know why [. . .] We are tied to the bus of globalization. We export miasma in the Third World and nearby areas. Crate upon crate of refuse: from *junk-bonds* to every other leftover, from domestic appliances to television *trash*, from fashion to soccer. But we do get our payback [. . .] Sea-faring carts filled with 'tourists' we must then welcome in the assistance centers of Lampedusa and nearby locations. Zero-star hotels. A general, impalpable malaise: too liquid, as Zygmunt Bauman would say" ("Un filo di gramigna" 57).

Garrone's cinema clearly establishes the connection between unfettered capitalism and the corruption and cultural impoverishment it reflects onto Italian and especially southern society. The director's early films, among the first to tackle immigration, show the other as the darker side of the Italian soul. *Terra di mezzo* and *Ospiti* establish the divide that exists between Italians who have lost touch with their basic humanity in the pursuit of economic success and immigrants who seek similar goals but are dehumanized in the process by shadowy existences in the world of prostitution and illegal labor. In *L'imbalsamatore* and *Primo amore*, Garrone more clearly focuses on the Italian peripheries to show how, even away from the urban centers, the demands of capitalist consumerism have affected and overturned centuries of social and familial rhythms. *Gomorra* discloses a quasi-apocalyptic vision, in which the encounter between postindustrial capitalism and the world's criminal organizations—those "strange hybrid[s] of modernity and tradition" (Cassano, *Southern Thought and Other Essays* 55) that have fully bought into the predatory advantages of globalization—results in inexplicable abuses to

the land, its people, and its traditions. While the just-released *Reality* (2012) mitigates the negative, criminal implications of modernity, the idea that made-for-television shows can obfuscate the difference between reality and fiction, as well as carry a poor fishmonger from his Neapolitan neighborhood to a life of paranoia and madness, suggests that Garrone is still pessimistic about the chances traditional ways of life have in the homogenizing consumerism of modern-day Italy.

From the *Taranta* to the Present: Tradition and Modernity in the Cinema of Edoardo Winspeare

Less well known than the previous three, the Apulian director Edoardo Winspeare has made the interplay between tradition, contemporary economic practices, and geopolitics central to his filmic production. Though born in Austria, Winspeare's roots are in the Salento, where his great grandfather moved from Naples after the unification of Italy. Over the past twenty years, Winspeare has filmed shorts, five feature-length films (the last in production at the time of this writing), and numerous documentaries.[35] With the exception of the documentary *Sotto il Celio azzurro*, these films focus on the relationship between tradition and modernity in the director's home region of Apulia. More specifically, while the first two films, *Pizzicata* (1995) and *Sangue vivo* (2000), are based on the traditions and stark landscape of the Salento, *Il miracolo* (2003) and *Galantuomini* (2009), are more concerned with showing what sociologists and philosophers have called the process of "deculturation" experienced by the Italian South through its encounter with globalization and modernity.[36]

Pizzicata, Winspeare's first feature-length film, opens with a shot of the town square in Galatina (in the province of Lecce) adjoining the basilica of Saint Paul. The caption reminds us that it is June 29, the feast of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, a significant day in the mythography of the Salento, because it celebrates the arrival of the *tarantati* (men and women who have allegedly been bitten by the tarantula) to the basilica to perform purifying dances and rituals and to give thanks and alms to Saint Paul for delivering them from the animal's venom.[37] We soon discover that this is the film's conclusion, as the following scene situates the action during the spring/summer of 1943, when Italy was in the death throes of fascist rule and the armistice with the Allies that would lead the country into a civil war had yet to be signed. The film centers on the life of the Pantaleos, an impoverished agrarian family in the Salento that rescues an American soldier when his plane crashes on the Capo d'Otranto. After nursing him back to health and pretending he is a cousin arrived from Lecce to hide him from the local authorities, they discover that he was born in the area (he still speaks Italian) but migrated to the United States when local landowners deprived his father's olive groves of the water they needed to thrive. The situation mimics the Pantaleos' own, as they struggle to keep their olive grove productive while local merchants and distributors force them to sell their crops below

cost—in collusion with the local landowner who wants to annex their land to his own.

A love triangle ensues between Tony and Cosima, Carmine's middle daughter, who fall in love with each other, and Pasquale, the son of the local landowner, who wants to marry Cosima and is emboldened by her father's permission to do so. In following local customs, the woman feels beholden to her father's decision, but she cannot let go of her attraction for Tony, a situation that leads to the film's tragic denouement. During festivities that Carmine initiates to celebrate his son Donato's return from the war front, the whole town gathers in the Pantaleos' courtyard to eat and dance. As the dancing begins, Donato and Tony engage in a benign rendition of the ritualistic *danza delle spade* ("sword dance"), which elicits humorous remarks from the crowd that encircles them. When Pasquale takes Donato's place and threateningly challenges Tony, the two have to be separated. Carmine, aware of the tension that ensues, asks the musicians to switch to the performance of a *pizzica de core* ("love *pizzica*") under the mistaken assumption that it is a safer dance. While Pasquale, still angry from the effects of the confrontation, leaves, Cosima remains close to the dancing circle and, encouraged by the music and already prey to the tarantula's "bite," joins the dancers. She then waves a handkerchief in front of Tony, initiating the courting ritual of the *pizzica*, to which he replies by approaching and being repulsed by the woman in an ever-closer courting spiral dictated by the dance. At the end of the dance, Tony asks Cosima's youngest sister to deliver the request for a rendezvous later that night. Pasquale, who espies the young girl's meeting with her sister, follows Cosima and watches as she and Tony exchange their first kiss. He then confronts the American soldier and, accusing him of desertion, stabs him to death. The next scene opens with a shot of Cosima, disheveled and lost, gazing absentmindedly into the distance. Gradually, she falls into a trance that is recognized by her older sister Immacolata as the first sign of the tarantula's bite. The film then returns to the opening scene of the film, as Cosima is taken inside the Church and reemerges standing on her own, possibly cured from the effects of the spider's bite.

The film conventionally represents gender relationships, as it portrays the stereotypical jealousy of the southern male, who sees women as his property, and the authority of the patriarch, who dictates the choices available to his daughters. Its value rests elsewhere, as it reproduces, in ethnographic fashion, traditional modes of existence of the region, in line with both Ernesto De Martino's *The Land of Remorse* and Winspeare's previous documentary, *San Paolo e la tarantola* (La Penna 189).[38] Winspeare goes beyond De Martino in his recovery of *tarantismo*. The latter claimed that his investigation showed researchers "how *tarantismo* had been profoundly disarticulated and weakened as a cultural phenomenon [. . .] [as] demonstrated by its current limited geographical diffusion, the relatively scarce number of *tarantati* and the decadence of the musical exorcism and the scenes in the chapel" (79–80). As if to counter these assertions, Winspeare situates his story in a time that precedes De Martino's study and evinces a tradition that is still tied to the

exorcism potential but also the symbolic order that precedes *tarantismo* itself. His choice to play out and explain through music, but also through the semiotics of gesture and gaze, the three different dances performed in the film (i.e., the "dance of the swords" between two antagonistic men; the "courting *pizzica*" between a man and a woman; and the "dance of the tarantula," or *pizzica tarantata*, performed by those bitten by the spider) complements De Martino's study and reconstructs musical and terpsichorean traditions tied to *tarantismo* in a way that amplifies the observations and archeological work of the Italian ethnographer.[39] We might say that Winspeare's insistence on the symbolic-musical value of representation to explain Cosima's *tarantismo* enables him to return this ritual to a preconscious and preethnographic moment that escapes the attempts of ethnographers to frame it within Western canonical discourse (where to classify and catalogue through the scientific methods of Western academia is to control and reduce the subversive potential of the phenomenon). By enabling the *taranta*—through its music, rhythms, and visual representation—to "speak" in lieu of the written word, Winspeare connects the spectators to a ritual phenomenon whose immediacy predates and sidesteps the structures of modern Western rationality.[40]

The subservience of rational and scientific discourses about *tarantismo* to its symbolic representations helps explain Tony's murder. The American soldier alters the delicate balance established in the traditional—and traditionalist—world of the Capo d'Otranto region. For one, he represents the new and the other already marked by negative connotations. When Carmine responds to Tony's celebration of the United States by saying, "For us, America is suffering," the statement reflects not only the reality of emigration as Tony's own family experienced it but also the country's adversarial relationship with Italy during World War II—and, as Winspeare confirmed, what America represents for the contemporary Salento: a globalized modernity that has transformed and somewhat corrupted its values (cited in Ferme). Tony's presence must be rejected, because he forebodes what modernity will bring to the region: daughters who rebel against patriarchal authority; workers that stand up to and clash with local bosses, altering the rapport of power imposed by centuries of feudal and landowner control; and the subversion of traditional values on which the region has based its millenary existence.

If *Pizzicata* paints a world that was and the risks it was facing toward the end of World War II, *Sangue vivo* represents a world where modernity has already encroached severely on traditions, and the two coexist in a fragile balance. The film, which casts many nonprofessional actors, describes the tensions between two brothers, Pino and Donato (though the former is nicknamed Zimba in the movie), who are played by two of the best tambourine players of the Salento's *pizzica*: the homonymous, recently deceased Pino Zimba; and Lamberto Probo, who had already acted in *Pizzicata* as Carmine Pantaleo's son, also named Donato.[41] A greengrocer by trade, Zimba is caught between the love for the traditions of the Salento—symbolized by the love for his father, whose death he could not prevent, but especially by his dedication to the *pizzica*—and the pressures of modern

life as they are embodied by his wife, who forces him to borrow heavily so she can open a shop that caters to expensive tastes and carries only novelty items (a symbolic marker of the divide between him and the modernization of his world). Thus he supplements his greengrocer pay with small contra-band in cigarettes and a less-innocent exchange of favors with Resta, the local crime boss, who has ties to the Sacra Corona Unita (the region's crime organization related to the Neapolitan Camorra and Calabrian 'Ndrang-heta). In addition, Zimba supports his widowed mother as well as Donato himself, who, while considered the best tambourine player in the Salento, has forsaken his musical career for a life of petty crime related to a drug addiction. The contrast between the two—one's sense of responsibility and one's sense of loss and inadequacy—drives the plot, though the film under-scores the devotion to family, which unites them in the end, and the prob-lems that development and criminal activities have wrought on the social and cultural fabric of the Salento.

Sangue vivo borrows heavily from Greek mythology and biblical texts (Casella).[42] It also balances a desire to revalue traditions—through both the camera's work on the landscape and the beautifully rendered musical score[43]—with the awareness that they cannot exist unscathed in the presence of modernity, though Winspeare changes how the Salento is represented vis-à-vis *Pizzicata*. If in the earlier film the director was trying to preserve and augment the meaning of former traditions (which admittedly he considered dead in their ritual values by the late 1990s), in *Sangue vivo* he documents the struggle between tradition and modernity but also represents the new Salento as a land of imbrication and *métissage*: "*Pizzicata* was a declaration of love. I chose to situate *Pizzicata* in 1943 because that was the year that marked the beginning of a cultural ending, the end of uncontaminated peas-ant culture, or rather: it had been contaminated through the centuries by the Greeks, the Turks, the Spaniards, but it was a different kind of contamination [. . .] I made *Sangue vivo* [. . .] to narrate a Salento I love very much, a contaminated land that has started to lose its identity, and is rediscovering it through music, with huge contrasts between the old and the new genera-tion" (Nacci para. 8). *Sangue vivo* is more than a nostalgic reappraisal of the past through cultural and ethnographic markers. It reassesses the present-day Salento by taking traditional markers (e.g., music, landscape, subaltern tradi-tions) and repositioning them in a context that has traumatically been trans-formed by modernization and the changed economics of the region (e.g., organized crime and drug trafficking).

Winspeare's following two films, *Il miracolo* and *Galantuomini*, address head on the South's struggles to adapt to the changes (and perversions) that modernization has brought to its way of life. In these films, the slowness and sense of measure traditionally tied to a southern way of living *from* the Medi-terranean are irreversibly altered by the impact with globalization and its eco-nomic patterns. To represent this conflict, Winspeare moves the action from the countryside to Taranto and Lecce, where the impact of Western capital-ism on the Italian South is most visible in the unfettered industrialization of

Taranto and the growth of organized crime as a multinational corporation of corruption in Lecce.

Il miracolo shows the juxtaposition, in the city of Taranto itself, of an atavistic world based on superstition and millenary traditions with a thoroughly industrialized city, whose culture, health, and belief systems are usurped in the name of economic development. From the opening scene, a shot of smoke plumes emanating from the stacks of the Ilva steelwork factories in Taranto,[44] modernity plays an important role in the film's symbolic universe. Winspeare insists on this detail by frequently filming the smokestacks and by noticing, in a documentary included with the DVD release, that the closest of these buildings rises no more than five hundred meters from the old center of a city that counts, in its plurimillenary tradition, Greek, Roman, Turkish, and Aragonese influences. To make this dramatic contrast more obvious, the second shot pans over the city from the high rise where the protagonist lives with his family, showing the two seas (*Mar Grande* and *Mar Piccolo*) that touch the city's shores and the Aragonese castle on the Old City island that was created artificially when construction of the castle's moat began and on which the old nucleus of the city—dating back to 700 BCE—was built. The scene thus juxtaposes the new port, built to house the Italian and NATO naval fleets, to the old port, where Spartan colonizers set up a thriving commercial city that would become among the most important in the ancient world—and the high-rises developed following the steelwork boom of the 1960s and 1970s to the solid and squat buildings of the Aragonese and Arabic periods. Winspeare points out, "I chose Taranto because I needed a city full of contrasts" (cited in Marinaci 214).[45]

The film acknowledges that the city's clash of new and old is central to its storyline. It follows the young protagonist, Tonio, as he seeks to build relationships with people he meets, since he cannot relate to his parents, a businessman desperate to stay afloat in the cutthroat real estate market and a housewife whose greatest concerns revolve around the family's next cruise vacation and the very expensive interior remodeling of their home. The plot explores the aftermath of an accident in which a car hits Tonio as he rides his bike by the seashore. The car's driver, Cinzia, who has run off without providing assistance, feels remorseful and seeks out the boy at the hospital out of genuine concern but also fearing that Tonio might recognize her and turn her in to the police. Her suspicions prove unfounded, as Tonio resists his father's attempts to find and prosecute the perpetrator and even lies to the investigators during a lineup to avoid incriminating the young woman. While still in the hospital, Tonio wanders the hallways at night until he comes upon the nurses' station. Just as he is told to return to his room, a monitoring device alerts the nurses that a patient has gone into cardiac arrest. Tonio follows the nurse to the patient's bedside, and when the nurse leaves to look for help, he is left alone with the man. Curious, the boy places his hand on the chest of the dead man, whose heart starts beating again, an event that, unexplained to the nurse, leads to the rumor that a miracle has occurred.

The film develops three themes related to real and metaphoric effects of the miracle. One follows Tonio's parents' attempts to capitalize on their son's newfound ability through local and national exposure, which the local and national media are more than eager to provide. A second theme focuses on the relationship between Tonio and his schoolmate Sanino Sambito,[46] who, having watched the news reporting of Tonio's miraculous abilities, asks that he cure his ailing grandfather's cancer (the steelwork in the background suggest that the cancer was induced by his work at the factory). In the end, Sanino's grandfather dies despite Tonio's repeated attempts to cure him, which confirms to Tonio something he already knew: he does not possess miraculous powers. Nonetheless, Sanino tells Tonio that he made his grandfather happy and encouraged him to live his last days to the fullest, something the camera highlights as it follows the man's final walk through the old city. Finally, Tonio develops a relationship with Cinzia, a rebel who lives at the margins of society. Their relationship is complicated by the return of Cinzia's mother, who abandoned her when she was seven to follow her abusive boyfriend but now wants to rekindle the bond with her daughter. Cinzia resists at first but gives in to the hope—despite her negative outlook on life—that they might become a family. When her mother chooses to go back to her lover, Cinzia loses control of her tightly wound self. In the process, she shuts out Tonio, goes on a drinking binge, and, after destroying every object in her apartment, prepares to commit suicide. She is interrupted when Tonio, whose father has finally broken through his own self-centeredness and canceled his son's interview with a national news channel, scales the walls and breaks into her house looking for her. Seeing Tonio, Cinzia starts to cry, aware at last that someone cares enough to break through her walls of indifference to save her.

Il miracolo explores the cohabitation of tradition with modernity, where the magic of unexpected connections (e.g., Tonio's imposition of the hands, his ability to forge a relationship with Sanino and elicit his grandfather's last joyous embrace of life, his miraculous rescue of Cinzia) contrasts with the modern city's experiential reality to suggest positive outcomes in the bonds forged between its citizens. The film also offers the city of Taranto itself as the site of negotiations between opposite yet complementary forces. In doing so, Winspeare highlights the cultural crossings that have enriched the city's life through its trimillenary existence, reminding us of words that Iain Chambers applies to another Italian city, Naples: "With its violent mixture of antiquated streets and global-design capitalism, [Taranto] confronts us as a riddle. Its sphinx-like qualities reflecting back what we hope, and fear, to see, disclose an unstable hubris dissected by different cultures and historical rhythms" (73). Yet, where Chambers sees in Naples (and Italy in general) the desire to suppress the city's complexity and cultural *métissage*, Winspeare juxtaposes complex markers—be they cultural, behavioral, or architectonic—to make the opposite statement: that modernity and its discontents are here to stay, so the new generations must find ways to preserve old beliefs and, through a solidarity that cuts across social classes and personal tragedies, forge bonds with each other and adapt to their ever-changing world.

Galantuomini offers few of the previous film's redemptive qualities. Here, Winspeare shows the more corrupted vision of the Salento, where capitalistic interests have infiltrated the traditional fabric of Puglia's countryside: "Before we were land's end and, beyond, Albania was closed off, there was nothing else. Now we are a borderland, at the edge with the Mediterranean and the East [. . .] From the social standpoint this has meant great changes, such as the trafficking of clandestine workers and contraband" (cited in Camerino 25). This globalization of clandestine traffic and contraband has led to the growth in the Salento of the *Sacra Corona Unita,* the crime organization created by transplants of the Neapolitan Camorra and Calabrian 'Ndrangheta that made Eastern Europe the focus of its illicit activities. Its goal, the boss Carmine Za' says in the film, is to create "an alternate State in which we rule like the Sicilians, Neapolitans and Calabrians"[47] by importing drugs, military equipment, clandestine workers, and prostitutes from Eastern European countries, using the Adriatic Sea to connect Puglia to Albania and to the Balkan republics of Macedonia and Montenegro.

What starts with a playful memory of the relationship, in the late 1960s, between three youths who belong to different social classes (the peasant Lucia Rizzo, the middle-class Fabio Bray, and the scion of the local upper class, Ignazio de Roha), fast-forwards a quarter of a century (the early 1990s) to show the damage wrought on their lives and the social fabric by the activities of the Sacra Corona Unita. (The Italian state police unleashed a major counteroffensive on the organization starting in 1995, seriously weakening its presence in the region.) Of the three, Lucia Rizzo more clearly embodies the tensions between past and present values as they are reflected in contemporary Apulia. That she is a woman ensures that, more than the friends of her youth, she is transformed and affected by these changes. Indeed, if Fabio is the least able to endure and adapt to these changes and dies of a drug overdose and Ignazio, despite being a judge, is still caught in a traditional role where men do what society expects them to do, including shielding their friends through an onerous pact of *omertà,* Lucia is the most tragic, because her position as a criminal boss runs counter to the roles that southern society expects her to fulfill as a woman, mother, friend, and partner.[48]

The title ironically plays on these issues, because *galantuomini* ("gentlemen") implicitly addresses two roles that men hold in society. It underscores their roles as men of distinction who must uphold certain standards of etiquette and behavior, especially toward women. But it also carries a shadier connotation, since members of criminal organizations often conferred the appellative to each other, thus suggesting the improper behaviors that hide under the veneer of appearances. As the film explores each of the men's relationships with Lucia (from Fabio, who sees her as a friend and mother figure, to Carmine Za', who is rumored as having had a sexual liaison with her but now acts as her mentor within the organization; and from Ignazio, who still sees her as his playmate and one-time love interest, to Infantino, who once defended her against bullies and then fathered her son before becoming one of her henchmen), it shows their inability to fulfill either of the term's

connotations. Those who were charged with protecting Lucia lie dead (e.g., Fabio, Carmine Za', Infantino, and even Donato, another henchman, who tells her, "Mary will protect you [. . .] and if she can't I will") or emasculated (e.g., Ignazio, who covers up her illicit activities from a fellow prosecutor but is abandoned by Lucia when she realizes that he will fail in his duties as a magistrate because he cares too intensely for her). In the end, it is Lucia herself who emerges as the strongest character, certainly corrupted by the presence of the Sacra Corona Unita but also a symbol of a world where traditional values and people's roles are questioned by the changing reality that the characters must navigate.

Galantuomini describes the loss of innocence of the Salento (Longo, "Edoardo Winspeare") and the atavistic impulses of its people, who are unable to leave this sliver of earth (e.g., Ignazio comes back to Lecce after practicing law in Milan; Carmine Za' fatally leaves Montenegro and pays with his life for his return). But here, Winspeare moves beyond previous representations, as the land is unable to save its people from the encroachment of modernity. If the *galantuomini* represent the honor of this region, their values are too deficient to uphold their traditions or save their families. The final scene encapsulates Winspeare's ambivalent message. Distant from their childhood rhythms and the earth of their youth, Ignazio and Lucia stare at each other across rush hour traffic in downtown Lecce. Ignazio, unable to enforce the rule of law honorably (since he has chosen to shield her from justice), watches impotently as Lucia walks away. Emasculated by the years spent in the northern metropolis (and possibly by its modern rhythms), he has lost touch with the world of his youth. Lucia, who stayed behind but refused to accept the classist and gendered rhythms of tradition, is also corrupted by the changes that globalized criminality has brought to her doorsteps. Unable to resist their lure, she has abandoned the atavistic honor of her land. Yet, in deciding to leave Ignazio and protect him from compromising himself any further, she holds the potential for rebirth through her role as a mother and by embodying telluric values. (It is she who, early in the film, most clearly connects with the land and who, in a key scene, asks Ignazio to dance with her, a clear reminder of the music and rhythmic courting of the *taranta*.) And, though the director does not provide an answer, it might be Lucia who, having viscerally experienced the land and its corruption, holds the keys to an as-yet-undecided future.

Emanuele Crialese's Trilogy of the Sea: A Return to the Mediterranean

Emanuele Crialese has made the interaction between people and the sea central to his work. In the films *Respiro* (2002), *Nuovomondo* (2006), and *Terraferma* (2011), Crialese spans the interactions between southern Italians and a sea that represents for them isolation and encounters, life and death, emigration and immigration. Especially in the transition between *Nuovomondo* and *Terraferma*, what emerges is the juxtaposition between migratory

movements west and north that speak to conditions of alterity actively at play in the communities these films describe. In doing so, he offers a vision of the Mediterranean that, removed from the overly nostalgic idealizations of films like *Cinema Paradiso* and *Mediterraneo*, provides a reminder of what the Mediterranean was and still might be for its inhabitants.

Respiro focuses on village life in a fairly remote Italian island and follows the difficult relationship that develops between the village inhabitants and Grazia, a mother of three who is affected by bouts of depression. An embarrassment to her husband Pietro for her continuous eccentric and public demonstrations, her role in the community becomes a general issue when she frees the island's stray dogs to spite her husband, who has shot one of them. After the villagers massacre the strays in the town's streets, members of the community ask that Grazia be sent to Milan for a psychiatric evaluation, evidence that modern scientific methods have affected the communal way in which island life deals with its problems. The relationship between Grazia and the community, especially as Crialese shows her defying traditional mores by listening to popular hit parade music and exhibiting her sexually alluring body in public, clearly points to a conflictual encounter between modernity and patriarchal traditions long embedded in island life. It also suggests that repressive values toward women must be renegotiated in light of civic and social values held dear by communal traditions.

When rumor of the plan to remove her from the island reaches Grazia, she hides in a grotto along the coast with the help of Pasquale, her eldest boy. Attempts by Pietro and others to find her fail, until Pasquale takes the dress Grazia was wearing when she fled and leaves it on a beach, leading the villagers to think she has drowned. Pietro is not convinced and even sees her bathing during one of the searches, but his friends do not believe him, thinking he is having a vision. As the film draws to a close, the villagers come together to celebrate the feast of Saint Bartholomew with the lighting of three bonfires on an island's beach. Once the fires light up the evening, Pietro wades into the water, followed by his sons and many villagers. He then dives below the surface and sees Grazia. The film concludes with an underwater shot of the bodies of Pietro and Grazia as their children and the villagers surround them, providing a human shield and suggesting a renewed compact of the village in protecting its own people.

The film contrasts the beautiful island scenery with the villagers' island life, as they depend on the sea for their wellbeing, both as a source of direct sustenance (Pietro and his friends are all fishermen) and, indirectly, through tourism. Crialese also shows the bonds that the island's inhabitants create with each other, as their world is transformed by its impact with modernity. Among the meditations we witness are the ones of the fishermen who can no longer rely on the sea for a living and find the presence of tourist boats and increased navigation near the island both destructive to their fishing and alluring as an alternate source of income. Even as they struggle with the changes happening to the island, Crialese emphasizes that interpersonal relationships between the characters are important in the island's daily life. In this

sense, the film reinforces values of Mediterranean life that we have explored throughout this work. For example, when Pasquale helps hide his mother in the grotto, Pietro's fellow fishermen join him in the search, regardless of personal and professional costs to them. Similarly, when Grazia's dress is found on the beach, the villagers, men and women, gather with Pietro in an extended vigil by the shore, taking turns in caring for his children as he deals with the angst of the loss. Finally, the film's ending, with the choral reunion of the villagers around Pietro and Grazia, suggests that island life is still dominated by values that have spanned generations and that are more important than anything else for the villagers. And the slow-motion view of the choral group from below suggests that in the water—in the Mediterranean—the village can still find the force of collective unity.[49]

Crialese's *Nuovomondo* moves backward in time to depict the emigration of Italians toward the Americas at the turn of the previous century.[50] The film narrates the vicissitudes that a Sicilian family named Mancuso (mother, son, and two grandsons) experiences as it makes the crossing into the United States to begin a new life (they are joined by two mail-order brides sold in marriage to Italian émigrés and by Lucy, an English woman who is making her second trip to Ellis Island in an attempt to find a husband). Here, the Mediterranean is absent, as the prevailing body of water is the Atlantic Ocean in all its vastness. The characters' estranged relationship with this sea is exemplified by their inability to comprehend the ocean. First, Salvatore, just embarked and lying in the bowels of the ship that takes them to the United States, asks other travelers when they will see the "Great Luciano," his mistaken translation of *grande oceano* ("great ocean"). Then, as they are allowed on deck, his mother Fortunata remarks in puzzlement at the vastness of the ocean—"Houses? Trees? Nothing [. . .] there's nothing"—to which Salvatore replies, "What trees were you expecting mother?" In the presence of the ocean, where, as Carl Schmitt has suggested, the gravitational center of Europe shifts westward and the sea becomes "sea without land [. . .] boundless sea that destroys any rootedness" (Cassano, *Southern Thought and Other Essays* 31), the family finds that its parameters no longer hold, a truth that is ironically rendered by the absence of trees, the most rooted physical objects in many natural landscapes. The ocean that leads to America upsets their expectations and, metonymically, embodies the experience of emigration as they lose familiarity with landscapes and traditions (a discomfort that is also rendered when the ship enters New York's harbor, shrouded in clouds, a land of arrival impalpable and mysterious for those who do not know it). Unable to operate according to what they know, the Mancusos, like other emigrants, imagine America as a land where the past no longer applies and fantasies overwhelm the senses (in postcards that show trees with money, hens the size of human beings, and vegetables so big that they must be carried on wheelbarrows).

Having landed on Ellis Island, the newly arrived migrants encounter a world as foreign to their expectations as Western capitalism and its progress-oriented, rational-pragmatic efficiency differ from the slow-going, traditional

life they have left behind. Lab rats under the microscope of pseudoscientific theories, the Mancusos endure a series of physical and intelligence tests that are supposed to ensure their fitness to contribute to life in their new country. The tests, based on eugenic theories in circulation in the early twentieth century that claimed that people from eastern and southern Europe were biologically and constitutionally inferior to the northern races,[51] become a metaphor for two ways of life, especially the puzzle-in-the-box test that all immigrants take. While the British Lucy easily manages to fit the geometric shapes into the holding square (while questioning how it helps the immigration officers stem the influx of contagious diseases into the country), Salvatore's oldest son, Angelo, does not fare so well. Unable to fit the shapes correctly into the box, he becomes frustrated and tries to jam them in. Salvatore, conversely, demonstrates a creativity that befuddles the immigration officer. Rather than fit the pieces two-dimensionally into the box, he creates two three-dimensional structures: a "house" and a "laundry line" or "stand-alone closet for clothes" (as he himself explains to the officer). Later, when asked which, between a bag of bread and a bag of gold, he would throw off a boat to survive at sea, he confounds the questioner by claiming that he would eat the bread and keep the gold, solving the problem of which to cast off. Again, Crialese points to a way of envisioning one's options that defies the model presented by the progressive New World and its expectations for its citizens. This difference is highlighted, in a subsequent scene, by Donna Fortunata's refusal to take a similar test because, as she argues, the US immigration officers arrogate the role of gods for themselves, forcing immigrants to conform to rules in the New World that are, in a pun, otherworldly. In the end, Donna Fortunata returns to the Old World, while convincing her son and grandsons to start a new life. She does so through Pietro, Salvatore's youngest son, who up to the denouement was considered a mute by all (as a result, the immigration authorities had slated him for return to Sicily, because he was labeled as defective, even though he performed all the tasks and commands to which he was subjected). In speaking his grandmother's reasons, Pietro once more underscores the inhuman treatment that Italian immigrants had to endure to be accepted in a new world where scientific determinism and pseudopragmatic reasoning trumped basic human values. The film thus allows Crialese to allude, as Amelio had done in *Lamerica*, to Italy's own contemporary migration problem. By depicting the suffering and racial prejudice that the southern Italian other (an otherness represented through the mix of strange rituals, honor, and decency embodied by the Mancusos) endured in the past century, he forces his audience to cross the boundaries of (national) identity politics and reflect more seriously on the human issues tied to immigration into their own country.

Terraferma renews Crialese's interest in an investigation of Mediterranean themes in the present, as the encounter with the migrant other from sub-Saharan Africa is central to the film. Here, the themes that were only sketched in *Respiro* have developed into the main story of the film: the inability of fishermen to live off their trade; the invasion of the island by hordes of neglectful

tourists who do not respect the island and its customs; and the desire of the authorities to hide the problematic presence of the migrants from the tourists, as it might cause financial repercussions on the island's economy. All of these stand in contrast with a way of life embodied by the family's patriarch, Ernesto, who holds onto values that the new generations have forgotten (but that, in the dramatic finale, are passed on to his grandson Filippo as he sets off to sea and the mainland with his new nuclear family).

Seen in this light, *Terraferma* serves as a sharp counterpoint to *Nuovomondo*. Crialese presents the behaviors and actions of the protagonists in *Terraferma* as a rebuke to the analytical and cold scrutiny of the migrants by the US authorities. If there people were tested and evaluated to see if they might infect the new American race, here what prevails is the ethical code of the fishermen: to save and protect those who shipwreck—to host them until they can stand on "firm ground." Though Crialese's view might be overly optimistic, it contrasts Mediterranean traditions to the pragmatic coldness of the West. And he connects his work to the tradition of Mediterranean *xenia*, a hospitality toward strangers that finds its roots in the relationship between enemies in the *Iliad* and in the welcoming honors that first Menelaos and Helen bestow on Telemachus and then Alkinoos and his wife Arete, rulers of the Phaiakians, provide Odysseus when he reaches their island kingdom as a castaway in the *Odyssey*. Indeed, when Ernesto first rescues Sara, a pregnant Eritrean woman,[52] and her son Omar from a shipwrecked boat filled with African migrants, he does not waver in defying the authorities' injunctions to turn in and report the fugitives; nor does he acquiesce to his family's desire to part ways with the strangers, who might bring the judgment of the law against them. On the contrary, he slowly creates a network of support, first through his daughter-in-law Giulietta and then through her son Filippo, which helps deliver Sara's newborn and, eventually, leads the woman toward the mainland in a quest to find her husband, already safely at work in the northern city of Turin.

Crialese is not the first to depict the plight of clandestine migrants who land in Italy in search of a better life and economic conditions. As we have seen, Gianni Amelio and Matteo Garrone described this phenomenon in *Lamerica*, *Terra di mezzo*, and *Ospiti*. Other directors, like Pasquale Squitieri (*Il colore dell'odio*, 1989), Michele Placido (*Pummarò*, 1990), Vittorio De Seta (*Lettere dal Sahara*, 2004), Francesco Munzi (*Saimir*, 2004; *Il resto della notte*, 2008) and Claudio Noce (*Good Morning, Aman*, 2009), have also filmed the plight of migrants arriving in Italy.[53] And in *Io, l'altro* (2007), the Tunisian, naturalized Italian writer and director Moshen Melliti had similarly shown the prejudices that emerge when the migrant other becomes the vessel for media-induced fears that many Italians have about foreigners.[54] These directors, however, almost invariably try to speak for the migrant other and produce narratives that, with varying degrees of success, display their perspectives when faced with the (somewhat stereotypical) condescension and racism of the Italians with whom they come into contact. The results are mostly flat depictions of the Italians in the films and a somewhat patronizing

buonismo (good-heartedness) pervading the representation of legal and illegal migrants.

Crialese's camera reverses the point of view.[55] While Sara and her son are granted voices as subjects, they are seldom the protagonists. In *Terraferma*, the perspectives that emerge are Ernesto's and his family's, and while they avoid a simplistic acceptance of the other as one's self, they grant dignity to the clandestine mother and her children, even as they encounter the complex gamut of reactions from the island's inhabitants. By choosing this perspective, Crialese presents a specific kind of discourse *from* the South that makes its inhabitants the subjects and connects their responses to the foreign other to a millenary tradition of hospitable humanity that contrasts with the one embodied by the hedonistic tourists, whose every whim the islanders must meet, and the one represented by the authorities, who, responding to the central authority of Rome and its policies, apply the law indiscriminately. That the film closes on a shot of the boat that Filippo, Ernesto's grandson, has hijacked from the maritime police's controls to take to the high seas (with Sara and her children) offers an open-ended interpretation of the encounter of Italy's South with the phenomenon of illegal immigration. On the one hand, like the Eritrean woman and her children, Filippo must take to the sea to find a future that traditional island life no longer provides for him. On the other—and more optimistically, in our view of Crialese's project—Filippo, Sara, and her brood constitute the new Italian nuclear family. By taking to the Mediterranean together, they reaffirm the positive nature of this sea and its ability to bring its people together. While the outcome is left suspended, only by taking a leap of faith based on trust and a millenary history of *xenia* rather than on contemporary prejudice might Italy's new generations reverse the racist and insular policies of the past thirty years and embrace the multicultural future that inevitably awaits them on the not-so-distant mainland shores.

To conclude, the directors we have examined offer multifaceted views of Italy's South that resist and deconstruct centuries-old essentialist representations of its culture and traditions. While discourses *on* the South from the perspective of Western modernity (whether in the writing of Jesuits, Grand Tour travelers, politicians, and intellectuals or in the postwar cinematic reconstruction of their predecessors) have often painted its regions as the sites of unhealthy backwardness and primitive habits, but also as exotic and sensual paradises, these directors evince different modalities to negotiate and revisit Italy's Mediterranean location. The results of their explorations are equally diverse and span a gamut of outcomes. Ciprì and Maresco grotesquely parody the destructive effects of capitalist modernity on the South while employing the aesthetics of ugliness and decay to undercut the myth of Western progress and its effects on the South's paradises. The destructive side of modernity through cultural homogenization and the corruption of traditions is central also to Garrone's opus. If in the early films the director suggests the opportunity for cultural renewal via grafts with the ethnic other, his latest works offer a bleaker outlook, as the criminal excesses of runaway globalization have

poisoned the South's landscapes and those who inhabit them. In Amelio's work, representations of the South as it was, through the history of emigration to the Americas and to the North during Italy's economic boom years, are balanced against the decay of those values (e.g., slowness, honor, and familial relationships) that, almost inevitably, have been sacrificed in these encounters with progress and its myths. Only by revaluing and embracing ethical stances in defense of marginal people and their traditions (as embodied by Albert Camus in his latest film) can voices from the South speak with and on behalf of alterity (their own and that of others). Winspeare and Crialese offer greater hope in their recovery of values specific to different ways to be southern: the ritual, quasi-mystical, curative rhythms of the *taranta* for the first; and the symbiotic relationship between island life, fishermen, and the Sea and the millenary tradition of *xenia* for the second. Yet their recovery is ambiguously fraught with tensions, as the corruption of organized crime, the loss of moral codes founded in honor and shame, and the despoliation of the landscape caused by the invasive presence of heavy industry and mass tourism constantly threaten this fragile balance between modernity and tradition. In the end, this is by no means an admission of defeat, but it suggests that the future and what it portends for Italy's Mediterranean identity are chapters still to be written.

Writing the Mediterraneity of the Italian Souths

Vincenzo Consolo, Carmine Abate, and Erri De Luca

In the last few decades, a large number of Italian writers are revisiting the sites and locations of Italy's Mediterranean identity in works that examine the effects of modernization on the South while consciously mobilizing the historical sedimentation of composite and minoritarian cultures of the peninsula. By doing so, they express concerns that encompass a much broader transnational dimension than the rich tradition of southern Italian writing to which they are indebted.[1] And while here, more than elsewhere, we will be forced to narrow our analysis, we will begin with a brief presentation of contemporary writers from the South before proceeding to an in-depth examination of Vincenzo Consolo, Carmine Abate, and Erri De Luca, authors selected for the exemplary value of their works in contemporary literary reflections of Italy and the Mediterranean.

In a sophisticated rethinking of "its literature and identity from the South" (Cigliana 6), Italian literary culture of the last few decades revisits its complex and multilayered history but also finds in the present-day transnational encounters with the South(s) of the migrant postcolonial worlds the occasion for symbolic gestures of cultural resistance. Among the many authors worthy of mention are Raffaele La Capria, Antonio Pascale, Ermanno Rea, Raffaele Nigro, and a host of younger narrators. La Capria's work (i.e., *Ferito a morte* [1961], *L'armonia perduta* [1986], and *Capri e non più Capri* [1991]) explores the immobility of southern society in the face of modernization and the moral decay that has gripped Neapolitans as they self-consciously refashion themselves, even as they allow their land and traditions to be altered and corrupted by late capitalist globalized modernity.

Ermanno Rea explores in his fiction the failed transformations produced by the post–World War II industrialization and politicization of the South in the *Rosso Napoli* (Red Naples) trilogy, comprising *Mistero napoletano* (1995), *La dismissione* (2002), and *Napoli Ferrovia* (2007). Pascale has written reportages and novels that focus on the coexistence between modernity and the deep-seated traditions of the Neapolitan hinterland. What emerges is a world in which modernity not only has failed in extirpating the pluricentennial culture of these peripheries but also has had to adapt to it and, in the process, has often become monstrously deformed (e.g., *La città distratta* [2001], *La manutenzione degli affetti* [2003], and *Passa la bellezza* [2005]). Equally significant is the encounter with the South(s) of the world that many of these authors address. This is an encounter that, as is the case of Pascale's *La città distratta*, expresses the anthropological change that has occurred in the southern Italian city of Caserta. "Distracted," as the title indicates, by their pursuit of northern ways of life, the native inhabitants have not noticed the transformation of their city. Thus the presence of migrants from Africa and the Balkans comes to function as the return of the repressed, a reminder of who they were and the cost of their own economic affluence on the lives of others. In this sense, the South emerges as a mobile configuration: "One could say: this is the South. Instead, more and more often we realize that the South does not exist, in the sense that the South is only a form of exchange" (Pascale, *Città* 86).

The ever-prolific Raffaele Nigro, especially in his most famous work, *I fuochi del Basento* (1987), reinterprets the phenomenon of brigandage we discussed in previous chapters from an ironic and constructive point of view that, rather than focusing on the passive critique of Unification, proposes instead "a critical rebirth that ties in to certain premises [. . .] that discuss imperfect Westernization and the appreciation of postrural art as a way to surpass the tearful complaints of a certain *meridionalismo* perpetually wrapped around the description of subalternity and marginalization" (Catalano 13). Key to Nigro's vision is an ethnographic approach, inspired by De Martino, that leads him to recover the culture of a subaltern world (i.e., from songs, poems, refrains, and legends to customs, rituals, food, and so on) whose frames of reference extend well beyond national boundaries and that is painstakingly reconstructed through Nigro's extensive work in both public and private archives. In his recovery of a premodern southern peasant culture that has been lost in the official historical record, Nigro avoids the temptation of nostalgia and frequently reminds the reader of the disappearance of this world as well as of its impracticability for the present but nevertheless engages its alternative values, including "a consistency lost" to modernity (De Donato 172). Nigro's other major novels, *La baronessa dell'Olivento* (1990), *Dio di Levante* (1994), and *Malvarosa* (2005), are also deserving of mention. *La baronessa dell'Olivento* begins in Albania at the time of the Turkish advance led by Murad Han Pascià. The main character and narrative consciousness of the novel is Vlaika Brentano, born armless and legless and thus confined to a basket. The daughter of a wealthy Neapolitan woman, Polesella Albino,

who was made captive by the Turks and eventually married her master, Vlaika has a brother, the gifted artist Stanislao, who is soon called to Scanderbeg's court. The brother and sister are then sent by Scanderbeg as ambassadors to Italy in a journey that leads them to Venice and then southward to the Kingdom of Naples, where local barons engage in alliances with French and Spaniards to retain their feudal privileges. In Italy, Vlaika will recover the integrity of her body, as a witch had predicted, and acquire the title of Baroness in a story that mixes history and fantasy to narrate a chapter of shared Mediterranean experience. *Dio di Levante* shares many of the elements of magic realism with the previous novel. It narrates the story of Pomponio, a poor child raised by the monk Demetrio Vassikopulo. Having become a picaresque storyteller, Pomponio travels all over southern Italy, telling fantastic stories, legends, and fables that return the natural world to a magic aura lost to the rationalism of technological modernity. In this sense, the novel recovers an archetypical, premodern, southern folkloric imaginary akin to that of *I fuochi del Basento*, an anthropological treasure lost to the present. Nigro's *Malvarosa* is set after World War II, but the transnational dimension that characterizes Nigro's other novels remains at work here. *Malvarosa* narrates the kidnapping of Eustachio Petrocelli, a native of Metaponto, and of the Tunisian Majid El Houssi by Algerian guerrillas and their subsequent imprisonment in a cell. Eustachio tells of his picaresque life as a thief of tombs and of the many people that he has encountered in his journeys, including the Senegalese Soukeyna by whom he has a daughter. Yet the novel is more properly a cross-cultural Mediterranean dialogue that leads the protagonists to reassess Western modernity and Eastern traditions, Christianity and Islam, and the values that they forge.[2]

Next to these fairly well established authors is also a younger generation of narrators (e.g., Roberto Alaimo, Maurizio Braucci, Giosuè Calaciura, Gaetano Cappelli, Antonio Franchini, Davide Morganti, Livio Romano, and Evelina Santangelo) who, from the 1990s onwards, have published a number of collected works. These include the anthologies *Luna nuova, scrittori dal sud* (1997), *Sporco al sole. Racconti dal Sud estremo* (1998), *Disertori. Sud: racconti della frontiera* (2000), and *Avant sud* (2001), whose themes range from expressions of cultural resistance to Western modernization, to the exploration of picaresque characters who are adrift in a world where residues of southern cultural legacies, including dialects and regional forms of Italian, coexist with the gestures, expressions, and icons of a globalized musical and visual culture (Cigliana 8).

The Mediterranean *Nóstos* of Modernity, or Ithaca as Troy

Mediterranean journeys are at the core of Vincenzo Consolo's writings. In the early novel *Il sorriso dell'ignoto marinaio* (1976), Consolo portrays a nineteenth-century nobleman, Enrico Pirajno di Mandralisca, who voyages to Lipari in the Aeolian archipelago and the villages that dot the Nebrodi

mountains in the interior. Likewise, in *Retablo* (1987), the eighteenth-century Milanese painter Fabrizio Clerici embarks on a Grand Tour of Sicily that brings him to Segesta, Selinunte, Mozia, Trapani, and Palermo, sites that he duly records in the travelogue that is the novel itself. In both works, the journey helps the privileged acquire a historical and ethical consciousness and understanding. As Consolo further elaborates in the essay "L'idea della Sicilia," the purpose behind the journey is important itself, as he shows by deconstructing the tradition of the Grand Tour exemplified by writers like Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Jean-Baptiste Labat, Charles-Louis Montesquieu, and Marie-Henri Beyle, also known as Stendhal, among others, for whom Sicilian travels did not lead to a process of discovery. Focusing on Goethe's *Italienische Reise*, Consolo writes that the German writer employed the ordering, harmonizing categories of Classical culture as a protective screen against the contradictory aspects of southern reality[3] so as to confirm a "Platonic 'idea' of Sicily" (xviii). By contrast, Consolo's travelers expose themselves to the multiform aspects of reality, including its most horrifying and brutal aspects. In the process, these travelers develop an active relationship toward history and existence that remains beyond the reach of Grand Tour travelers.

Consolo's belief in the journey as an essential epistemological tool finds additional elaborations in the 1990s when he devotes the essay "I ritorni" and the book *Il viaggio di Odisseo* (1999) to the topic.[4] In "I ritorni," Consolo focuses on narratives of returning to Sicily by native writers Giovanni Verga, Elio Vittorini, Giovanni Brancati, and Stefano D'Arrigo, while in *Il viaggio di Odisseo* he reflects on Ulysses's return journey to Ithaca after the Trojan war, the so-called *nóstos* depicted in the *Odyssey*. In both texts, Consolo draws on Walter Benjamin's *Angelus Novus* to connect travel narratives to a primordial form of Mediterranean orality that originates in a moral obligation to tell: "Narration precedes the novel [. . .] It is entrusted to oral story-telling more than to writing [. . .] It is the rendering of an experience, the account of a journey [. . .] And there is in narration, a practical idea of rightness and justice, an ethical requirement" ("I ritorni" 144).[5] More specifically, the Homeric *nóstos*, the tortuous journey of return undertaken by Odysseus, helps expiate the destruction caused by the invention of the wooden horse that enabled the Achaeans to enter and destroy Troy. Ulysses must atone his guilt and achieve catharsis by fighting the monsters he encounters before he can return to Ithaca. Only then he can kill the suitors and recover the civility of human consortium and affection represented by island society and his wife Penelope. In this sense, his journey is also a process that recovers the balance between the opposite poles of the wild and the cultivated olive tree, barbarity and civilization, and bestiality and humanness lost in the horrors of the Trojan War.

However, for Consolo, in contemporary culture, the positive outcome of the Homeric *nóstos* has become impossible. As he claims in *Il viaggio di Odisseo*, the journey no longer envisages a return, just endless wandering and exile: "His island, his Ithaca, the land of memory has disappeared, it

has been destroyed, erased by the Suitors [. . .] The lands of memory are now reduced to rubble [. . .] Ithaca has become Troy" ("Conversation between Vincenzo Consolo and Mario Nicolao" 60). This transformation has occurred because in "modernity, guilt is no longer subjective, but objective, it belongs to history. Monsters no longer emerge from the sea, from the depths of the subconscious, but they are concrete, real monsters" (ibid. 61) that originate from unbridled capitalist and technological modernity, which "has freed us from labor, from isolation, [and] from slowness" but has also "created the atomic bomb [. . .] infected the world, [and] poisoned nature" (ibid. 66). In short, "the wild olive tree has overrun the cultivated field" (ibid. 63), and since the balance between the wild and the cultivated olive tree has been lost, the role of the traveler is now that of "the defeated hero [. . .] embark[ing] on a journey only to express his rage and sorrow, to cry on the ruins" (ibid. 60) of a degraded Mediterranean.

This condition is fully exemplified in the travelogue *L'olivo e l'olivastro* (1999).[6] The book, which owes its title to a passage from Book Five of Homer's *Odyssey*, presents a modern Ulysses, who, washed ashore after days battling a stormy sea, hides under the intertwined branches of a planted olive tree and a wild olive tree before facing a world where modernity has transformed "civilization 'for man and nature'" into a "civilization 'against man and nature'" (Traina, *Vincenzo Consolo* 98). The framing chapters of *L'olivo* set the tone for the remainder of the book. In the first chapter, a survivor of the 1968 earthquake of Gibellina, a seismic event that destroyed many villages in the Valle del Belice, voices the ineffectiveness of modern civilization in enabling the recovery from a natural catastrophe, as he is promised shelter and a job but then must leave "mother and sister in the barracks" and migrate to Switzerland (Consolo, *L'olivo* 9). The ending chapter takes place several years later back in the Valle del Belice, where the site of the earthquake has been covered by cement in a massive land art project known as "Cretto di Burri," after the architect who designed it. A new city, Gibellina Nuova, stands twenty kilometers away, the result of the collusion between political authorities and local Mafia bosses. Envisioned as a display of modern architecture, it has devolved into an eccentric collection of buildings that clash with native ones and have deteriorated so rapidly that they are uninhabitable: "On the naked, harsh terrain [. . .] rise arrogance, offense, the theatre of marble, of cement, of bronze; high above the asphalt, the dissonant flower, the Texan star, the door to the trade show of emptiness, to the metaphysical city" (ibid. 145–146). In Gibellina Nuova, the narrator meets the survivor from the 1968 earthquake, who has returned from working in the Swiss mines. Together, they go to old Gibellina, where a reenactment of the 73 BCE siege of Masada is taking place. In a fitting equivalency, just as the Jewish inhabitants of Masada committed mass suicide to escape the yoke of the Romans after a three-year siege, only dead bodies, destruction, and silence can emerge from the cement stage of the "Cretto" (ibid. 149).

The framing chapters offer an example of the devastation caused by natural forces when compounded by the foibles of modern civilization. The

remainder of *L'olivo e l'olivastro* further indicts modernity as the main culprit
for the destruction of Sicilian cities that the traveler records in his journey
around the island. Thus, in the northeastern plain of Mylai, an area described
by the poets Timaeus and Ovid as a place of beauty suitable only for the sun
god's grazing herds, lies the horror of modern Milazzo: "a vast and dense
city of silos, utility poles, chimneys that endlessly vomit flames and smoke, a
metallic, infernal city of Dis that has defaced and poisoned everything" (ibid.
28). Like Milazzo, the southern cities of Augusta, Melilli and Priolo, over-
looking the Ionian coast, have been transformed into the Kingdom of the
Laestrygonians (ibid. 34). Resembling the monstrous race of giant cannibals
in the *Odyssey*, factories of cement and fertilizers, oil refineries, and power
plants spew acids, dioxins, naphtha, and petrol that devour sky, land, and
sea. Across this degraded landscape, transformed into a wasteland of utter
desolation, past cultures and civilizations are not spared. Oil refineries sur-
round Megara Hyblaea, settled by Greek colonists in 728 BCE before it was
abandoned, following the war against Syracuse, to be rebuilt in the new city
of Selinunte. Megara's ancient necropolis has been desecrated, and the grot-
toes, where ancient corpses were laid to rest, have become the receptacles of
modernity's wastes: metal cans, bits of wood, plastic bottles, balls of tar, and
other detritus carried by a polluted sea. Syracuse itself, site of a famous Greek
amphitheater, the tomb of Archimedes, and an ancient stone quarry where
the tyrant Dionysus listened to the whispers of his prisoners, has been trans-
formed beyond recognition: "Awakening, unable to recognize the place, he
no longer knew where he was, he watched, lost, the city beyond the port on
the island, enveloped in vapors, in mist. He understood [. . .] that he was in
Syracuse" ("The Ruin of Syracuse" 88).

Traveling to the southwestern side of the island, the same devastation
becomes apparent in the description of Gela. Founded in 688 BCE and the
site of a temple to Athena and fortifications built by Timoleon in 340 BCE,
modern Gela gave birth to the metaphorical inferno that resulted from the
discovery of deposits of fossil fuel in the 1950s. While the founder of ENI,
Enrico Mattei, hailed this discovery as the chance to break the monopoly of
oil companies and allocate 75 percent of oil profits to owning regions,[7] the
defacement that has occurred is a stunning reminder that modern develop-
ment does not necessarily imply progress: "From those wells, those chimneys
over temples and necropolises, those heaps of stony corals and bones [. . .]
started the earthquake, the upheaval, the hell of today [. . .] the Gela of a
sea fattened by oil and cement tiebreakers [. . .] the Gela of the loss of every
memory and meaning" (Consolo, *L'olivo* 79). Devastation is also apparent
in Aci Trezza (ibid. 47–50), Catania (57–60), Caltagirone (69–75), Cefalù
(123–125), Erice (132–135), Mazara del Vallo (137–141), Noto (115–
118),[8] and Trapani (129–133), cities large and small where past civilizations
are now lost. Overwhelmed by so many ruins, the traveler bypasses Palermo
and launches in an invective against the horrors wrought by modernity on
Sicilian shores: "No, no more. He hates now. He hates this terrible island,
barbarized, his land of massacre, of assassination, he hates his country plunged

into the night, the Europe empty of reason" ("The Ruin of Syracuse" 89). Nothing remains for the modern Ulysses but the brief moments of comfort, found in the work of Sicilian writers Luigi Pirandello, Leonardo Sciascia, Giovanni Verga, and Elio Vittorini, in the examples of those who fought (and often perished) in heroic battles against social and civic devastation and in the affection of friends and relatives encountered on his path: "good people of the sea, the large family, father and mother" (Consolo, *L'olivo* 141).

Palermo is instead the destination point of another modern-day Ulysses, Gioachino Martinez, the main character of *Lo spasimo di Palermo* (1998; a reference to the Church of Santa Maria dello Spasimo in the Kalsa neighborhood of Palermo). The epigraph, from Aeschylus's *Prometheus Bound*, warns that the island will not offer solace to the traveler but only the opportunity to voice more pain and sorrow: "*Corifea*: Reveal everything; scream your tale aloud [. . .] *Prometheus*: Narrative is sorrow, but even silence is sorrow" (Consolo, *Lo spasimo* 7). Such occasion materializes at the first sight of the city. The old Arab quarter, the Kalsa, or al-Halisah, lies neglected, while criminality grips the rest of the city: Palermo "has become a battlefield, a daily slaughterhouse. They shoot, they set off explosives, they mangle human lives, char bodies and splatter body parts on trees and on asphalt" (ibid. 128). Among the slaughtered are two men who symbolize the war against the Mafia, judges Giovanni Falcone and Paolo Borsellino, both assassinated in the summer of 1992. The assassination of Borsellino, a native of the Kalsa who was killed by a car bomb in via d'Amelio two months after his friend Falcone died from the explosion of a bomb so large that it left "an infernal crater on the road to the airport" of Punta Raisi (ibid.), leads the narrator to include the score of the *Stabat Mater*, a visual rendition of the mournful, somber recollection of the judge's mother, who the narrator used to watch anxiously waiting for her son's return from her balcony, and of the many victims of the Mafia wars that tore through Palermo (and Sicily) in the 1990s.[9]

The travels of this modern Ulysses extend, however, far beyond his native island to the new "Troys" of the Balkans, North Africa and the Middle East. Already in the pages of *L'olivo* that describe the ruin of Syracuse, the narrator evokes another Mediterranean devastation—that of Utica, the first Phoenician colony in North Africa, whose remains were moved from their original site when the Majardah river overflowed its banks due to deforestation and poor land management ("The Ruin of Syracuse" 89). Other writings bring the narrator to Algiers, Mostar, Ramallah, and Sarajevo, where neglect has been compounded by the destruction caused by recent wars and conflicts. Of the Kasbah of Algiers, a city permeated by the foul smell of gas brought about by rapid, uncontrolled modernization, the narrator notes that what remains are "patches of debris [. . .] the bowels of the neighborhood and its fragile texture (stone and compact clay), which the famous, atrocious battle [. . .] of independence, and subsequently other events, have damaged and reduced to a state of gangrene" (Consolo, "Algiers" 93). Traveling farther east, to Ramallah, the narrator comes upon an elderly woman—a mother who "without doubt [. . .] lives in a muddy refugee camp, in tiny rooms

with tin walls" (Consolo, "International Parliament" 104), crouching on the pavement, selling a wild herb that she collects on the rocky hills around the city that resembles "the Iblei plateau in Sicily" (ibid. 105). Raised to a symbol of Greek tragedy, the woman embodies a culture and society torn asunder by years of wars and conflicts in the Holy Land. In another village in Gaza (Rafah), the narrator finds a man who weeps over what was once his home but is now a heap of rubble, shaken to the ground by the manmade earthquake caused by bulldozers and Israeli tanks. In Khan Yunis, another town in the Gaza Strip, the narrator foregrounds how pain and sorrow breed violence as its citizens prepare the funeral of a suicide bomber. The ceremony revives the tradition of southern Italian communal celebrations described by De Martino in *Morte e pianto rituale* (107), an odd equivalent in a region where human lives are weapons of war and death is glorified as a means to further divide and separate.

The ex-Yugoslavia is yet another destination for Consolo's traveler. Departing on a ferry from Ancona, the modern Ulysses reaches the Croatian coast, where he recognizes "the Mediterranean vegetation similar to that of Greece, Sicily and Turkey [. . .] the olive trees, the fig trees, and the vineyards" ("But Is This Sarajevo or Assisi?" 98). This tourist paradise disappears as the narrator travels toward the border between Croatia and Bosnia Herzegovina: in Pocitelji, an ancient Muslim village, "the Croatians have destroyed a mosque, a Koran school, a hamman, towers, and minarets. From this point onwards, up to Buna and Mostar, it is a landscape of ruins" (ibid. 99), which reaches catastrophic dimensions in Sarajevo: "Sarajevo no longer exists, and can no longer be built [. . .] The ruins will last forever" (ibid. 101). In the widespread devastation that sweeps across the Mediterranean, one city easily replaces another: the refugee camps of Ramallah are those of Gibellina (Consolo, "International Parliament" 104); Sarajevo's crumbling walls match those of Assisi struck by an earthquake ("But Is This Sarajevo or Assisi?" 102); the ruin of Syracuse fades into that of the Tunisian Utica (Consolo, "The Ruin of Syracuse" 89); Palermo is "a Beirut destroyed by [. . .] the powerful war of the mafia against the poor and destitute in the city" (Consolo, *Pietre di Pantalica* 168), or one of the many Italian cities where the Mafia has spread (Consolo, *L'olivo* 125). As one city melds into the next, the narrator cannot but rue their common fate: "He hates this sacked Constantinople, this burned Alexandria, this plagued Athens, Thebes, Oran, this Messina, Lisbon [. . .] He hates this theatre where compassion has died, this stage where Iphigenia's throat was cut, this Etna, this Tauris of squads where goods and lives are consumed, honor, decency, language, intelligence sold off" ("The Ruin of Syracuse" 89).

The Aeneas of the Contemporary Mediterranean: Exiles and Migrants

If Ithaca has been transformed into Troy, as an effect of a modern civilization turned against man and nature, and the traveler cannot recover his native

island, then the journey of Ulysses becomes that of Aeneas, the exile who from Thrace reaches the shores of Crete, Carthage, Sicily, and Latium. In short, alongside the Greek *Odyssey*, the Latin *Aeneid* is central to Consolo's Mediterranean imaginary as he narrates the journeys of exiles, emigrants, and immigrants who flee violence and destitution. This Virgilian aspect of the Mediterranean journey plays out in *L'olivo e l'olivastro* as the narrator projects Consolo's own migration from Sicily in 1968: "The South was over, the peasant world ended. Everything had industrialized, even the mafia and the camorra. The great exodus of farmhands from North to South took place. And I too migrated [. . .] to Milan. Urbanized peasant, I knew nothing of metropolises and industrial cultures. I felt bewildered and displaced, even linguistically" ("Porcacchia" 119).[10] But in Consolo's works, migrants turned exiles abound. Besides the already mentioned survivor of the earthquake in Gibellina (*L'olivo e l'olivastro*), another emigrant, Gioacchino, plays a central role in *Lo spasimo di Palermo*. On the train that leads him home, Gioacchino realizes the loss that migration entails. The speech of southern emigrants who, like him, are returning to their native villages from the northern cities where they work, bears the vestiges of its past richness: "They were Southern rhythms, speeches that were no longer dialects, but not yet the destructive national language [. . .] He heard the colorless and elusive Messinese; the round and ostentatious Palermitano; the allusive and chanting Catanese; the harsh and aspirated Agrigentino; and the ancient Lombard of Piazza, Nicosia, or San Fratello. He was reading in that concert the history of every place; the surviving signs of migrations, of ancient settlements" (*Lo spasimo* 95). When Gioacchino arrives in Palermo, he cannot recognize the city and realizes that, like other emigrants, he is an exile in his native land.

Consolo knows the pain of an impossible return to a native land that no longer exists. Yet he establishes a strong distinction between the Italian emigrant experience and that of present migratory flows. As he states in "I muri d'Europa," "from every East and South of the World [. . .] come today the boat people of rafts, boat-carts, containers, tankers; the caravans of survivors of wars, ethnic cleansings, genocides, hunger, diseases" (152). These people are trying to reach a land of opulence, a north that now includes the southern shores of Europe, the reason the channels of Otranto and Sicily have become walls—"borders of water" to keep these disinherited people away from "our golden 'first world'" (ibid.). In this changed configuration, the South has become the North for those further south and east, and the migratory experience acquires more tragic dimensions. This emerges in *L'olivo*, where the visit to Mazara del Vallo, on the northwestern coast, elicits a commentary on the city's transformation from emigrant to immigrant destination. A town of Arabic origin known for its harmonious architecture, Mazara was severely hampered by many earthquakes that affected its development. Since little was done to enable a recovery, its native inhabitants left: "It was nothing but misery and emigration of fishermen, masons, artisans, farmers on the other side of the sea, to La Goulette of Tunis, the fields of Soliman, Sousse, Biserta" (*L'olivo* 139). When a new city was rebuilt during the years of the

Italian miracle in the 1960s, migrants from Tunisia moved into the shanties of the old Arab quarters to fill local labor needs. Here, they were subjected to the violence of individuals whose families had once emigrated: "the pogroms of racism against Blacks and Arabs, of beatings and homicides on the part of squads of cruel youths, the naziskin of furor and madness" (ibid. 140). But Mazara is by no means unique. The short stories "Porta Venezia" and "Report of Basilio Archita" further expand on the Mediterranean of the new migrants and exiles.[11] Narrated from the point of view of Basilio, a Sicilian man who works on a Greek ship, "Report" recounts the fate of a group of black migrants from Kenya. Traveling as stowaways, they are discovered by the crew, which refuses them food and water and locks them in the hold of the boat, where they are subjected to a cruel game of "cowboys with Indians" (114). When they escape and break into the kitchen looking for food, they are killed and thrown into the sea off the coast of Mogadishu. "Porta Venezia" is a less tragic story but nevertheless reveals how the Mediterranean has become the frontier of "fortress" Europe. The story takes place in the city of Milan, where the narrator is walking in the neighborhood of Porta Venezia, noting the "wide range of southern tawniness" as groups of Egyptians, Eritreans, Filipinos, Moroccans, Senegalese, and Tunisians appear on Corso Buenos Aires (247). There are also southern Italian immigrants, Apulians, Calabrians, and Sicilians who maintain a physical separation from the newcomers. As a rainstorm begins, the narrator seeks shelter in an Eritrean restaurant and orders a plate of *zichinì*, a spicy dish that the Eritreans consume together by "dipping their fingers into a large common plate" (ibid. 248). Sitting by himself in a corner of the restaurant, the narrator nostalgically recalls that the common plate was a practice "also done in Sicily, among peasant families" (ibid. 248) before "the breach of communion, the separation of bodies, the solitude, the diffidence, and the fear of each other" (ibid. 248–249) and of the "North, the industrial world" (ibid. 248) took over southern Italian customs. Back on the road, the narrator is forced again to seek shelter in an Egyptian restaurant after the rain resumes. As he listens to a jukebox playing "the songs that are the matrix for all Mediterranean music, for the *canto jondo* of Andalusia, for the songs of the Sicilian carters, and for the Neapolitan serenades" (ibid. 249), a raid by the Italian police interrupts this moment of communion. In an overt reinforcement of boundaries and divisions, the narrator is escorted outside the restaurant and admonished not to come to such dangerous places (ibid. 250).

Mediterranean Melancholy

Undoubtedly, Consolo holds a tragic vision of the Mediterranean. His writings, however, also express a commitment to recover the cultural ruins that bear witness to a common Mediterranean history and experience that has been exiled from our collective memory. Such history encompasses, by necessity, the violence and depredation of Greek, Punic, and Roman wars, Norman dominion, Christian crusades, piracy, slavery, imperialism,

and colonialism. The short story "Il Teatro del Sole" exemplifies Consolo's understanding of "the sea [. . .] as a place of invasion and of possession of nature, of existence" ("Tuna Fishing" 182). The story is set in Palermo's *Quattro Canti*, or Piazza Vigliena, a square spatially blocked off by a four-story, seventeenth-century building. A symbol of Spanish power after the victory at Lepanto and Charles V's ascent to the throne, the building anchored a new program of urbanization, and its statues and ornaments narrate a crescendo of power from earth to sky through the architecture of fountains and the statues of Charles V, Philip II, Philip III, Philip V, and, finally, the four patron saints of Palermo. But at the height of midday, the narrator imagines the arrival of the conquerors who preceded the Spanish kings: "Arabs, Persians, Egyptians, Libyans, Sudanese, Berbers [. . .] all united in the faith of Allah" (Consolo, "Il Teatro" 35). As if in a parade, they are followed by the Normans "Roger and William of Hauteville [. . .] Northern heroes of the Christian Reconquista" (ibid. 35–36), and then by the emperor Frederick II. Soon after, "the powerful Catholic Kings of Spain" (ibid. 36) arrive with their armies of soldiers, inquisitors, and executioners, causing the sky to darken and images of plague and destruction to take over. Frightened, the narrator runs from the square, escaping the ghosts of a long and violent history.

The Mediterranean can elicit more positive, if limited, recollections from Consolo. At times, the ruins and fragments that Consolo recovers function as the contents of a past that cannot and should not be forgotten, since they question the certainties of the present moment and point toward a vision of a better future. In this sense, Consolo's relics are never the product of a depoliticized nostalgia but are harnessed into sociopolitical usefulness since they remain fraught with melancholia—the failure of the *Trauerarbeit*—the work of mourning necessary to transcend the loss of the object of history, famously articulated by Freud in the essay "Mourning and Melancholia" (originally published in 1917). Loss, despite the tragedy that it entails, is for Consolo contingent, because it is always tied to specific historical and social occurrences. Therefore, the failure of the *Trauerarbeit* and the attendant expressions of melancholy that traverse his works signify a refusal to settle into resignation and passivity before a landscape of ruins. Melancholy thus emerges as a necessary, indispensable condition for an oppositional literary practice—a textual resistance to capitalist and technological modernity that defaces nature and creates boundaries and separations between people and cultures. This aspect of Consolo's writing is exemplified in the many metaphors of melancholy in his works but is perhaps best illustrated in the ekphrastic rendition of Albrecht Dürer's copper engraving of the angel of melancholy in *Melencolia I*, from *Nottetempo*: "A messenger arrives [. . .] a dazzling angel [. . .] From calm backgrounds and quiet distances [. . .] he appears, in a white tunic, virginal as his forehead or the book that lies on his knees [. . .] This is the time of gloom, of inertia, of loss, of melancholies without remedies; the time of perfect geometries, of inescapable measures, the sphere, the compass, the hour-glass, the scale [. . .] Farther, lie the dark

skies and the foliage of petrified trees, the dark entrances of caverns, the empty dwelling [. . .] Farther, lie the Ruins" (*Nottetempo* 65).

Completed in 1514, Dürer's angel is a dejected figure that holds a compass over an open book. The composition presents elements traditionally associated with melancholy, such as the bat and the starving dog, but other objects are included to confer upon melancholy a meaning that exceeds its traditional associations with brooding, pain, and sorrow. If we accept the interpretation that was proposed by Aby Warburg and his disciples Erwin Panofsky, Raymond Klibansky, and Fritz Saxl, Dürer's engraving solidifies the vision of a *heroic melancholy*.[12] Here, the sorrowful contemplation of decay and destruction is no longer tied to a sense of purposelessness but, through the epistemological revision brought about by renaissance humanistic thought, becomes an attribute in the quest for knowledge (which explains the inclusion of elements symbolic of measure and order, such as a balancing scale, an hourglass, a compass, and the sphere). Consolo makes no allusion to the exegetical tradition of Dürer's masterpiece. Yet the passage that concludes his ekphrastic rendition of the engraving come strikingly close to the meaning of *heroic melancholy* proposed by Warburg and his disciples, since the descent to recover the unmourned ruins of the recent and ancient past foresees the possibility of a future ascent: "More ruins reveal themselves: forums and houses, stadiums and theatres, stores and roads. We descend into the darkness [. . .] Fragments and slivers surface [. . .] the world resurfaces from the depths: sunken containers, underground chambers, tunnels; through delicate figures [. . .] the whites, the yellows of the plaster, the zesty greens, the blues and the buried reds begin to vibrate" (ibid. 67).

This emancipatory possibility is illustrated in the cultural ruins that surface amid the devastation narrated and reported in his fictional and essayistic works. Like Antonino Uccello, the collector who, "fighting against burial and oblivion," moved to Palazzolo Acreide in 1960 to start a museum to preserve "the things, the objects [. . .] the songs, the legends, [and] the popular traditions" of a peasant culture that was rapidly disappearing under the forces of modernization (Consolo, "La casa di Icaro" 123), Consolo seeks to preserve the fragments of Mediterranean heritage in encounters between cultures, people, and traditions that often originate in violence and possession but also give way to tolerance and syncretism. Emblematic are the essays of *Di qua dal faro*, where Consolo recovers the positive elements of Muslim domination in Sicily. For example, he revisits the events that led to the conquest of the island but also notes, "After the depredations and devastations of the Romans, after the extreme abandon of the Byzantines [. . .] with the advent of the Muslims, a sort of renaissance began for Sicily" ("Sicily and Arab Culture" 228). This renaissance was promoted by the confiscation of the vast, monocultural latifundia estates, the reassigning of lands to soldiers, North African immigrants and Sicilian peasants, and the creation of a sophisticated system for the collection and distribution of water.[13] But "the greatest miracle achieved during the Muslim domination was the spirit of tolerance, the cohabitation of peoples of different culture,

race, and religion. This tolerance, this cultural syncretism, was to be inherited by the Normans, under whom the ideal society was truly realized, a society in which every culture, every ethnic group lives in respect of others" (ibid. 228–229).[14]

Consolo also recovers Mediterranean syncretism in the art and architecture of the island, the history of trade and labor, and the physiognomy of people. In *Nottetempo*, the Cathedral of Cefalù, a building of Norman origin that resembles a fortress but contains Arab-Byzantine mosaics and architectural motifs, is described so as to heighten the encounters between North and South in Mediterranean Sicily: "He found himself facing a castle of Scotland, Cornwall, or Normandy against an enameled sky of Morocco, a barren rock of Atlantis, standing out amidst [. . .] Tunisian palm trees" (Consolo, *Nottetempo* 144).[15] The history of trade and labor, particularly tuna fishing, illustrates how this millenary collaboration could traverse frontiers, as a Muslim organization of work brought together fishermen from Djerba, Palermo, Sfax, Tunis, Trapani, and Tripoli: "The *tonnaroti*—in the common situation of *dimmî*, or subjects under the obligation of *gizyah*, or tribute—joined together in *consorterie* or corporations [. . .] They ran the tuna fisheries through a collective [. . .] of joint ownership and egalitarian distribution of income in the absence of a sole holder of capital" ("Tuna Fishing" 163). Physiognomy is also a mark of Mediterranean crossings and contaminations as already evinced in the short story "Porta Venezia." At the sight of African, Arab, Asian, and southern Italian immigrants walking in *Corso Buenos Aires* in Milan, the autobiographical "I" discards national cartographies to affirm a belonging developed across boundaries and sustained by cultural, linguistic, religious, and ethnic pluralities (re)discovered in the memory of the Mediterranean: "On Corso Buenos Aires [. . .] I immersed myself [. . .] into waves of Mediterraneity and southerness [. . .] I, of many races, belonging to none, the offspring of Byzantine weariness, Jewish dispersal, Arab withdrawal, Ethiopian internment: I, born from a varied mixture, by chance white [. . .] freed myself in this humanity as if on a beach warmed by the first rays of the morning sun" ("Porta Venezia" 247).

Language plays a fundamental role in Consolo's reclaiming of the contaminations of Mediterranean culture. His prose, widely viewed as difficult, is by his own admission "memorializing and metaphoric [. . .] not of a logic, referential type, but intensely transgressive and expressive" (*Fuga* 14). Best described as poetic prose, it reproduces the rhythms of oral poetry, which he believes are an essential component of both the Classical epic and Arabic storytelling in the Mediterranean (ibid. 52–53). Consolo's sentences make extensive use of figurative language (e.g., analogies, metaphors, metonymies, synecdoches) but also alliteration, assonance, onomatopoeia, and rhymes, which he often couples with syntactic inversions of qualifiers and qualified, anacoluthons, ellipses, asyndetic coordination, and so on,[16] as evinced by the sentence that opens *L'olivo e l'olivastro*: "Now he can't narrate. Time halts what's pressing and belabored. His lip presses against the high wall, in shortened circle, thawing a moan, its tears. He can only say that one day he

departed with a bag bursting of remorse and pain. He departed from a valley of absence and silence, packed with strays, a clump of crows over tufa and plaster" (*L'olivo* 9). Consolo also works with a vast range of registers so as to recall the voices that record the sedimentation of cultures and civilizations in the Mediterranean. While registers range from the quotidian to the elevated, the vast lexicon that he uses includes expressions belonging to archaic, rare vocabularies that have been forgotten, such as those employed by the vanishing cultures of peasants and tuna fishermen, or to highly specialized jargon, such as that of art and architecture. Consolo draws as well on regional variants of Italian and southern dialects in their Arabic, French, Greek, and Spanish ascendance as when he describes the earthenware jar through a list of synonymic words that record a plurality of cultures: "*scifo*, amphora, *olpe*, crock, *mafara*, kaolin, fatten-tub, *quartara*, night urn, white mother, *Idria*, jar" (*Nottetempo* 155). Paradigmatic declinations of the linguistic archive as the one just cited run throughout Consolo's works and act as an additional strategy to recover forgotten cultural ruins. At a time when a standardized, impoverished Italian language has become hegemonic—"a new Italian born from the new economic and social order imposed by the media" (Consolo, *Fuga* 27)—the writer has the duty "to recall" (ibid. 28) through the archeological resumption of words that "are not [. . .] invented, but *recovered* and *rediscovered*. I find them in my memory, in my linguistic patrimony, but they are also the result of my research, of my historical and linguistics excavations" (ibid. 54, emphasis added). The result is an expressionistic prose at the boundary between poetry and orality, a linguistic practice that joins the remembrance of the visual fragments to record the palimpsests of the Mediterranean experience because, as Consolo observes, "where there is no past, there cannot be a future" ("Anime verticali" 192).

CARMINE ABATE: CELEBRATING A MOSAIC OF BELONGING

The Calabrian Carmine Abate differs from Consolo in his more positive representation of southern society and its people, though they share similar concerns—in particular, the ties between present and past and the role that tradition plays in shaping one's reality. Abate's singular perspective in the panorama of southern writers is that he writes from a position of double alterity. On the one hand, as a southern Italian, he followed the migration of previous generations toward the North and into countries like Germany and France (in Abate's case, his father first became a miner in France and then worked in Germany, Abate following after receiving his university degree to teach Italian in a variety of German locales). In Germany, Abate wrote and published his first book of short stories (which was then translated and published in Italian with the title *Il muro dei muri*) before returning to Italy and settling in the borderland region of the Trentino, a conscious choice of a *terra di mezzo* (in-between land) that testifies to the mongrelization of his life experiences.[17] On the other hand, Abate is a Calabrian *Arbëreshë*, a member

of old-standing Albanian communities that moved to southern Italy to escape the rule of the Ottoman Empire.[18] His people were therefore the forerunners of current waves of migration into Italy that involve, among others (as he narrates in *Il mosaico del tempo grande*), present-day Albanians. The result of this dichotomy is that Abate's characters are constantly caught between the conditions of foreignness (by being other in Germany, as Italians; by becoming *germanesi*, Italians whose language has become inflected by German[19] and *Arbëreshë* in their native hilltop towns in Calabria) and belonging, as revealed by an almost visceral connection to the land of their birth and its traditions. From this duality emerge both a sense of displacement and a belief in the powerful, quasi-biological ability of the land to regenerate and repair their mental health and sense of displacement. The protagonists' identities are therefore constantly reworked as they face the "provisional status of [their] being, wherever they are; the deep need, almost physical, to find one's roots [. . .] and the discovery that the journey begins anew every time, as if it were an inescapable destiny" (Ghensini cited in Abate, *Terre* 10). In the background, soothing yet evocative of different origins, is the Mediterranean Sea, which, as Predrag Matvejević would say, carries for its inhabitants the memories of similarities and the surprises of constant differences (*Mediterranean*).

The reworking of one's identity through displacement emerges clearly in Abate's first novel, *Il ballo tondo* ("the round dance," which refers to the *hora*, the traditional wedding dance performed by the *Arbëreshë* and other Balkan communities but that also reenacts, as we have seen in Chapter 4, millenary traditions in communities across the Mediterranean). In the novel, this displacement is most visible in the experiences of the "Mericano" Francesco Avati, the narrator's father, who migrates to Germany to work and whose father migrated before him to the United States in search of his own fortune.[20] His migration to Germany is paralleled by the story of his people, who are themselves the descendants of fugitives and refugees from Albania in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. As such, their customs are a mixture of Albanian folklore (e.g., the "round dance" of the title) and Calabrian culture, and their own language mixes the Albanian spoken by the *Arbëreshë* with present-day Calabrian dialect and spoken Italian (or German and French, when the characters have lived or are living abroad). Abate's characters thus occupy a gray area as both insiders and outsiders—as both welcomed guests from previous centuries and others in the linguistic and social fabric of the South: they are cultivators of the South's traditions of hospitality (no doors are locked and people can walk inside each other's homes at will) but also face the erosion of centuries-old customs and mores (e.g., they are forgetting the songs of their people) as modernity and outsiders infiltrate their traditions.

Central to the novel's plot is the conjoining and meeting of different ethnic groups: first, in the marriage of Francesco Avati's oldest daughter to a man from the Trentino; and second, through the courtship of the second daughter by the schoolteacher Carmelo Bevilaqua, who himself is the bastard offspring of a local woman and an Irish tourist. The two become contrasting metaphors for how the mingling of ethnicities might work. Avati's eldest

daughter, Orlandina, marries a man older than herself who worked in Germany with her father and has shared in the geographical displacement of the migrant. He also comes from the mixed ethnic region of the Trentino, which enables him to understand his father-in-law's identity issues while appreciating the traditions that his wife upholds in their culturally mixed household, as he shows by adapting to her desire to teach their son the *Arbëreshë* dialect: "At the beginning, her husband yelled if he heard her speak with the son in that African-sounding language [. . .] Then his parish priest told him that knowing two languages means knowing two cultures [. . .] and two cultures enrich you, they make you smarter when you grow up. So he stopped complaining; on the contrary, when Paolino began chirping in the Trentino dialect and in *Arbëreshë*, he admitted that he had been wrong and apologized for what had happened" (Abate, *Il ballo* 162). If initially the husband wanted to assimilate his son to dominant linguistic paradigms (i.e., by learning Italian and the northern dialect of the Trentino), he eventually understands that melding the two cultures will enrich his son's experience more than adapting to official standards. Orlandina's desire to teach her son *Arbëreshë* is a way of keeping alive not only her language but also traditions and a way of life that, throughout the centuries, have served to bring together entire communities:

> "*Ngë del illi o mos ngë del/ngë bën ditë o mos ngë bën/se na kemi kush nab ën dritë.*" Now that the yeast had bubbled up, the friends started singing again [. . .] And while singing they held hands, dancing in a circle, in front of the home's steps. The song spread through the small streets, [women, children, and the men arrived] just in time to admire Orlandina in the middle of the circle, with a silk handkerchief knotted around her arm, at the center of the world, dancing lightly, and they thought: what a dream [. . .] while her dancing friends wished her good health, long and prosperous days, a full beehive, a white destiny. (ibid. 68)

The "round dance" of the title emerges as a propitiatory rite for the wedding, and the girl's voices symbolize the village's unity in celebrating an important event in the life of the community.

The relationship between the second daughter, Lucrezia, and the teacher Carmelo Bevilacqua is more complex. On the surface, Bevilacqua embraces his betrothed's cultural background more readily. He eagerly records and transcribes every phrase, proverb, song, or utterance that might help him reconstruct the history and culture of the Italian-Albanian communities of Calabria. His desire to integrate himself in the culture culminates in the engagement ceremony when he shows up in full ethnic *Arbëreshë* dress, eliciting the laughter and ridicule of the community. Bevilacqua sees his further attempts to honor their culture derided and booed at the christening of a bronze statue representing the *Arbëreshë* hero, Scanderbeg, in the town's main square. The resistance of the community to accept Bevilacqua as one of its own reflects a desire not to be cataloged as an anthropological curiosity, the object of study of a colonizing dominant culture. This is the case

suggested by Bevilacqua's decision to postpone the wedding and travel to Somalia, where, as a representative of the former imperial power, he will study the local populations and continue his ethnographic studies. The Avati are greatly upset by the postponement, and grandfather Lissandro and grandson Costantino reveal Bevilacqua's true intentions:

> Grandpa Lissandro raised his pinkish face toward the teacher and said: "We say: *Dirq e lìtì, mos i këllit mbë ship, se te çajnë poçë e kusì.* One doesn't always reap benefits from being hospitable, on the contrary."
>
>   The teacher didn't have the chance to ask what that meant because Costantino exploded in a delayed defense on behalf of Somalians, as if he had it on the tip of his tongue: "They should be on edge. Until now, foreigners have gone there with only one idea: colonize them, suck the blood out of these poor people, erase their culture. All of them. Italians, English, Americans and now the Russians, after the socialist *coup d'état* a few years ago." (ibid. 190–191)

Upset by the slight suffered by Lucrezia's and the family's honor, the grandfather then enters the teacher's home at night and stabs him, leaving him for dead. When Bevilacqua recovers miraculously, he leaves for Somalia. Only later will he fulfill his promise to marry Lucrezia, before once more departing toward the African country, where he has found riches and happiness (and a local population that is less resistant to his attempts to understand and co-opt it). Implicitly, then, Abate's novel reveals a desire to resist the colonizing gaze of the teacher and the desire of the Italian other to catalogue and control the *Arbëreshë* minority. The recording and preservation of *Arbëreshë* lore and traditions falls instead to Francesco Avati's son, Costantino, who, upon the teacher's departure, decides to record his people's culture and carries on the preservation of their oral history.

La modo di Scanderbeg, Abate's 1999 novel, narrates, often in the first person, the life of Giovanni Alessi, a thirty-something-year-old *Arbëreshë* man who, like most of Abate's protagonists, leaves his hometown for Germany to find work. However, Alessi is significantly different from other migrants described by Abate, since his job is not as a low-paid factory worker but rather as a radio and television reporter. Indeed, he is educated and leaves the town only to follow a longtime girlfriend, Claudia Camardi, a television anchorwoman who has succeeded in the news industry by defying the backward thinking of the village's inhabitants—though to achieve such success, she has rejected and disowned her past, to the point of dyeing her hair blond to assimilate to dominant cultural stereotypes: "She likes the job, even though she's had to color her hair blond, because the program's producers insisted: on Italian television, people like blondes better. Anyway, she has the blue eyes of the typical blonde" (Carmine, *La moto* 175).

The narrative is structured so that the opening and closing words are pronounced by a collective "we," representing the voices of Alessi's childhood friends, who also function as the voice of the community. Abate's "we" only

introduces and concludes the actual narration, which collates instead many voices, all tied together—like a narrative Chinese box—by Giovanni's narration of his experiences and the stories and letters that others have shared with him. This technique recaptures the oral storytelling of the *aedus* who, from time immemorial, has populated the Balkan peninsula from where the *Arbëreshë* people originated (and, in Abate's novels, characters sit in public places, well in hearing distance of the wider community, to narrate their stories or those of their ancestors).[21]

Giovanni reconstructs his own life and the life of his parents by tying them to the mythical hero of the *Arbëreshë* people, the already mentioned mythical/historical figure of George Castriota Scanderbeg, whose last name becomes the nickname of Giovanni's father in recognition of the spirit of independence he exhibits. (By the end of the novel, the son will also have inherited the nickname, a sign of his growing esteem among the locals.)[22] To connect his own experience with the past of his people through the "steadfast recovery of memory" (Traina, "La moto"), Abate intertwines personal first-story narratives with historical elements that, here and in his other novels, he culls from archival research into the past of Calabria and of his people. More specifically, in *La moto* this is done by dedicating entire chapters to fictional letters Giovanni receives from Stefano Santori, who, as a child, had predicted Giovanni's death at age 36, just a few years before the diegesis takes place. Stefano reemerges in Giovanni's life as an established historian who reconstructs the traditions of his people and publishes a well-received book about the *Arbëreshë* populations of Calabria, just as Giovanni himself reconstructs the history of his own father in relation to the original Scanderbeg.[23]

In *Il ballo tondo* and *La moto di Scanderbeg*, Abate emphasizes the strong ties that exist between his contemporary Italian-Albanian characters and the mythical past of Albania. Both titles echo the previous culture: the *ballo tondo* performed by Albanian people during ceremonial nuptial parties and the hero who led the Albanians in their fight for independence. One senses in these novels the attachment not only to one's land but also, more important, to one's psychological nature as *forever* other, as someone who is a real citizen of the world—an exile who has a psychological center in the tradition of his people, the singing of old epic stories and in the towns perched atop of rocks, and the old and never-visited Albanian motherland, a place that holds more value for what it can preserve of identity than for its physical and geographical centeredness. Juxtaposed to this very strong identification of self is the nomadic existence imposed on the author and the characters by their condition as Mediterranean migrants—as Italian-Albanians, others who must adapt and transform themselves to generate new cultural hybrids, altered yet enriched by the different cultures that mix within them.[24]

Rerooting One's Self: Owning One's Landscape and History

With his third novel, *Tra due mari* (2002), Abate moves away from the Italian *Arbëreschë* community and explores the Italian side of his heritage. Though the novel's narrator, Florian Heumann, was born in and lived in Germany, he is the scion of a family anchored to the hill town of Roccalba, a fictional, horseshoe-shaped village that overlooks the Ionian and Tyrrhenian sides of the Mediterranean, where the distance between east and west is at its narrowest in the Italian Peninsula (Gulf of Sant'Eufemia and Gulf of Squillace). The novel relates, in Florian's voice, the events that led his grandfather, Giorgio Bellusci, to spend his life rebuilding the family's tavern, il Fondaco del Fico, where generations of the family have brushed against history and politics. Stubbornly resistant on its foundations, the edifice attests to the attachment to one's land of Giorgio Bellusci and his predecessors. This attachment, as the narrator reveals, has been passed on to him, since he now owns and runs the newly reconstructed modern hotel that his grandparents have bequeathed to him. Yet the Fondaco del Fico serves also as a metaphor for a way of being Mediterranean that has emerged in discussions throughout this book and as a pretext for rendering thematically the relationship of the South with modes of living that are other from itself (Manai).

The Fondaco's claim to fame is having been a stopping point for writers and artists who explored Calabria as part of their Grand Tour of Italy. More specifically, on a visit in the nineteenth century, the French writer Alexandre Dumas *père* and the painter Louis Godefroy Jardin left behind a diary and a hand-drawn sketch of Bellusci's ancestors that are the grandfather's prized possessions, contributing to his lifelong devotion to rebuild the tavern. The tavern had burned down a few years after the French artists' visit, when troops sent by the recently established Italian government had set fire to it to smoke out brigands who were barricaded inside. Though the owner, "Focubellu" Bellusci, had been promised that the family would be repaid for its loss, the money had not been enough to rebuild the tavern. The effort of rebuilding it becomes the lifelong project of Giorgio Bellusci, a hardheaded, generous man who resembles his ancestor "Focubellu." Giorgio had once toured Italy's southern regions himself, a trip during which, sidetracked in his quest to reach Bari and propose to his current wife, his motorcycle had been stolen. Refusing to give up his quest, he continued on foot until he was almost run over by a car driven by Hans Heumann, a German photographer. The two started back on Bellusci's quest (succeeding in obtaining the woman's approbation) but not without many side trips through the Calabrian countryside and seashore. It was this trip, and discovering an off-road, off–Grand Tour South, that propelled Heumann toward a career as an internationally recognized photographer. This trip also cemented a lifelong friendship across the North-South divide between the two men—a friendship that was further consolidated when Heumann's son, following in his father's steps, traveled to Italy's south, falling in love and eventually marrying Bellusci's daughter,

Rosanna, the first woman in her family to receive a university degree with a thesis on the Grand Tour travels of famous literati to Calabria and, in particular, to the Fondaco del Fico.

If this is the historical background of the novel, its main thematic interest resides in Giorgio Bellusci's resistance to the threats of local thugs tied to the 'Ndrangheta, the Calabrian equivalent to the Mafia, which nowadays has supplanted both the Mafia and the Neapolitan Camorra as the most powerful criminal organization in Italy.[25] As Bellusci defies the local gangster's request for a protectionist *pizzo* (bribe), the threats grow, from verbal warnings to the killing of his animals (Bellusci works as a butcher). Angered but undaunted, Bellusci resists this intimidation, eventually killing the gangster when the latter insults and threatens him with dangerous consequences to members of his family. Condemned to eight years in prison, he returns from his time in jail to pick up where he had left, spending all his earnings and savings on the construction of the Fondaco del Fico, which had been left unattended during his absence. Once more, however, unknown thugs blow up the almost completed Fondaco with explosives. At this point, seeing his grandfather's passion and understanding the importance of preserving his own attachment to the land and to this piece of history that the family has staunchly preserved, Florian and his girlfriend Martina enlist the help of his other grandfather, Hans Heumann, who generously contributes to the reconstruction with money and his own artistic work as an initial draw for the reopening of the hotel. Having accomplished what he set out to do, Giorgio asks Florian to take over the running of the establishment and leaves with Hans on a new tour of the South to retrace the tour they had taken together many years earlier and renew the bond of their friendship. This time they are hunted down by a 'Ndrangheta hit man and killed. Having accomplished its mission of revenge, the criminal organization loses interest in the Fondaco, thus allowing Florian to keep running it and perpetuate the family's tradition. More important, the example of Bellusci has been passed on, so the narrator can say, "My claws are drawn, I'm not lowering my defenses, the town is with me, almost all of it" (Abate, *Tra due mari* 196), a final admission that, while not completely reassuring, reflects a unity of intent that was missing from the town's citizenry earlier in the novel. The characters' final thoughts reflect a general optimism that Abate has about Calabria and its people. Here, there is very little nostalgia for a better time in the past. There is instead the realization that one's sense of identity is given by the rootedness in one's land, not public discourses. Calabria, we are told, is a land to which you might not belong by birth but to which you belong through a quasi-biological inheritance.

If *Tra due mari* focuses mainly on one location as the site around which a number of thematic strands are built, *La festa del ritorno* (2004) most closely represents the travails, physical and emotional, of emigration, a centuries-old issue for southern families. The protagonist, Marco, whose narrative excursus opens when he is a 13-year-old boy, recounts events that began six or seven years earlier, when, as a young boy, he endured the frequent departures of

his father, Tullio, to France to find work that would provide a better future for his family. As is the case elsewhere, Abate structures the narration by juxtaposing the storytelling of father and son, the former to justify why he has left and to explain his life as an Italian abroad and the latter to reveal the difficulties he encountered in dealing with his father's absence and to fill the narrative gaps about what happens in the village during this absence. This lends an oral character to the narration that reminds us of the importance of the oral tradition in preserving one's familial and geographic relations.

The latter intent drives the novel, as evinced by the title. The father's storytelling and, implicitly, the son's counternarrative are initiated at public celebrations of villagers and friends during the yearly holidays, which, as tradition has it, happen around bonfires, to which everyone contributes kindling and wood. At these times, the villagers rely on oral storytelling to reestablish bonds, instruct each other on their current lives, and tie themselves once again, in the circularity of the oral myth making,[26] to the past and to the land.[27] The holiday and celebration thus take on a personal meaning for Marco but a communal one for the villagers who, bound by the shared history of Albanian migration to Italy and contemporary ones to the North, use these opportunities to renew bonds and traditions. While at times this reminiscence veers toward nostalgia, Abate's intent is quite different, since the celebrations honor both the return of the emigrants and the constancy that the traditions and those who remain provide for the sense of identity of those who return.[28] Since these yearly celebrations of the return achieve the same importance as the sacred holidays and the propitiatory land rites celebrated by the bonfires, they suggest parallels with the mythic return home of the *nóstos*, which, as we have seen in Consolo, is central to many aspects of Mediterranean culture.[29]

Abate's revisiting of his *Arbëreshë* past reaches new levels in *Il mosaico del tempo grande* (2006), a novel whose sweep is epic and conjoins past and present-day migrations of Albanians into Italy. The narrator is Michele, a young man who has just completed his university schooling and who weaves together the stories of two protagonists: Antonio Damis, the descendant of the first *Arbëreshë*, Greek Orthodox pope to have reached Calabria when the Christian Albanians escaped the Ottoman invasion of their homeland; and Ardian Damisa, also known as *Gojàri* ("Golden Mouth"), a recent emigrant escaped from Albania at the fall of Enver Hoxha's communist regime. The two had met when Ardian was transferred from a *centro di permanenza temporanea* ("center of temporary permanence") run by the Italian government to the town of Hora, where Antonio's family lives,[30] and had decided to open a shop. Through Michele, Ardian/*Gojàri's* storytelling dominates the narration as he interweaves it with the mosaic he is piecing together in his shop to create a composite experience of past and present Albanian people. The tassels of the stories thus symbolically provide an overarching narrative of the *Arbëreshë* history over the past six centuries.

The novel recollects the foundational times of the Calabrian Hora. It also tells a parallel history of destruction and loss that occurred in the original,

Albanian Hora, from where the first Albanians traveled and which remains a mythical place to which, at one time or the other, different characters wish to return.[31] Thus the son of the first Calabrian pope returns to Albania with Liveta, an old warrior who had saved Scanderbeg's life, only to be skinned alive when they are captured by the Ottomans. Antonio Damis also travels there, hosted by Ardian Damisa's father, after the fall of the communist regime. In between, Abate expertly repeats some of the themes that are a constant in his work, such as the ideas of the interconnectedness between the past and the present, between tradition and modern displacement, and between what he repeatedly calls "extended time" and "extended world" and the more limited, particular time of the protagonists' current existence. These diachronic juxtapositions encompass historically specific events and locations but just as easily refer to the cyclical repetition of the myths narrated by Abate. Significantly, the novel ends with the murder of Antonio Damis at the hands of Za Maurélja, the mother of his spurned lover Rosalba, who herself committed suicide when she could not carry her revenge to completion. The murder weapon is the gold-hilted dagger that Scanderbeg had donated to Liveta as a reward for saving his life and that, with other precious objects, had formed a treasure that the early popes had collected to finance their first Orthodox church on the windy hill where the Calabrian Hora had been founded. In the connection between the sacrifice that generations of Albanians had made to restart their lives in the hill towns of Calabria and the human sacrifice that such treasure elicits from the inhabitants of the new Hora lies submerged the pain of both exile and too-frequent good-byes from the town inhabitants.

Abate's elaborations on the South, the Mediterranean, and the difficult new intersections they face with modernity are also on display in the essays of *Vivere per addizione e altri viaggi* (2010) and in his last novel, *La collina del vento* (2012). The essayistic reflections expose a trend in his work that was present in the early novels but that he now renders explicit. As he recounts episodes ranging from his youth (e.g., buying a recorder to preserve the rhapsodies and songs of his people) to his life abroad and in the villages of northern Italy as a substitute teacher before migrating to Germany and then back to the Trentino, where he establishes his residence, Abate "sums up" his life experiences. Significantly, the final essay, which provides the title for the book, explains both the meaning of the *festa del ritorno* fictionalized in the previous novel and the significance of the recurring symbolism of trees (the fig in earlier books and the olive that is central to the last novel): "We do not want to give up on our village nor do we want to abandon our cities and towns in the North. We feel better this way, we are more complete, more alive, like a beautiful tree that has deep roots here and elsewhere, and strong branches and juicy fruits everywhere" (*Vivere per addizione* 127).

La collina del vento provides an epic sweep that follows four generations of the Arcuri family through a period that covers, from a regional, local perspective, the history of Italy during the past century. More than in other novels, Abate shows in *La collina* an awareness of the philosophical and cultural

discourses that inform our own book's theoretical framework. For one, the Arcuri's windy hill, owned and defended through time from the attempts by many local *latifundia* owners and *'Ndrangheta* henchmen to expropriate it, is anchored by a majestic olive tree, a not-so-subtle symbolic reference to the role played by the olive tree in the culture of the Mediterranean (as we have seen in our analysis of Consolo's work). Moreover, because the underlying theme of the novel is the search by four Arcuri generations for the ancient Greek city of Krimisa on or in the proximity of their property, the juxtaposition of Greek ruins and the contemporary struggle to preserve one's cultivated land again suggests Abate's awareness of the work of Consolo and other Mediterranean scholars. On this background, Abate relates the familiar *topoi* of the people's attachment to the land and the injustices perpetrated by the *latifondisti* and by fascist and local authorities on the peasants and the dispossessed.

As we said, *La collina del vento* suggests the discursive relationship between the past and the present—the lost, mythic time of ancient Greek civilization (i.e., the myth of the archer) and the struggles of the present. Not surprisingly, the ancient coins that Alberto Arcuri discovers on his land are what allow him to buy additional (rocky and uncultivated) land. And having his own land to work and cultivate gives him the freedom to escape the fate of too many villagers who must work in the region's *solfatare* (sulfur mines) or migrate to America when their work dries out. Similarly, the connection between the ancient civilized world and family, land, cultivation, and education (both his grandson Michelangelo and the great grandson who is the narrator are school teachers) allows the family to fight against the challenges brought on by the abuses perpetrated by the *latifondisti*, the fascists, the state itself, and, in contemporary times, the *'Ndrangheta*, under the veil of ecological wind-energy consortia bent on expropriating the land for ulterior motives. Here, then, emerges an interpretation of Consolo's dichotomous presence of the planted olive and the wild olive in the culture of the Mediterranean: "They sprout from the same trunk these two symbols of the wild and the cultivated, of the bestial and the human, sprouting like a portent of a bifurcation of the path or of destiny, of the loss of self, of annihilation within nature and of salvation in the womb of a civilized society" ("Olive and Wild Olive" 76).

If Consolo's view, as we suggested earlier, tends toward a pessimistic representation of the contemporary South that is only partially rescued by heroic melancholia, Abate's vision shows greater faith in the resiliency of a southern way of life to oppose to the challenges that its people and their land face. Indeed, the closing image of *La collina*, while speaking of a natural disaster wrought by a deluge never before seen in the region (suggesting the environmental imbalances that global warming have caused at both real and metaphorical levels), expresses a positive outcome that had been hoped for by the family's four generations. As half the hill they had counted on for their hopes and sustenance crumbles in a terrifying avalanche, its fall unearths huge stone blocks that bring back to light, after centuries of oblivion, the ruins of the ancient city of Krimisa, vindicating the beliefs of the family and its supporters that they were protecting with their lives and livelihoods a

deep connection with an ancient past. Though the ruinous fall of the hill might validate Consolo's doubly negative view of his modern South, the joy that the characters feel in having discovered the ancient city (symbolically sealed by the enthusiasm of father and son, eager to share an embrace that brings their search to an end) suggests an alternate interpretation. In tearing apart the hill (but not, apparently, the great olive tree that dominates it), the calamitous weather does not simply bring destruction to the cultivated lands of the Arcuri. Instead, it helps them fulfill a centenary search for the cradle of their civilization and gives meaning to their persistent refusals to abandon the hill to the ulterior motives of those around them. Additionally, at the metaphorical level, while the ruins of Krimisa suggest a world that is only recaptured through ruins, Abate suggests, as Consolo does through his revisiting of melancholia, that the ruins themselves are worthy of attention if indeed we want to reconnect with our past but also root our own present-day experience in a culture that gives hope and the strength to endure the assaults of modern-day capitalism on its foundations.

"Shades of the North": Erri De Luca's Southern Perspective

Consolo and Abate ground much of their experience of the modern and contemporary Italian south in generally autochthonous traditions (e.g., Greek and Albanian myth and history as they relate to immigrant colonies in Italy; the multicultural past of the region, based on Arab, Norman, and Spanish dominations; and latifundia, the southern question). The Neapolitan Erri De Luca represents a more complex figure among southern writers, in part because he has written more than sixty books in a variety of genres over the past 25 years and in part because his interests intersect a variety of Mediterranean discourses somewhat distant from each other, not solely invested in the Italian tradition, but more generally pertaining to a broader Mediterranean and southern worldview. That said, to deny De Luca's work a peculiarly southern (and Neapolitan) relevance would be to deny recurring themes and tropes in his work that have been important for our analysis throughout.

De Luca's trajectory as a writer is unconventional. Born to members of the Neapolitan bourgeoisie that had lost everything between the two world wars, he was raised in poverty before the family's economic conditions improved. Like many of his generation, he soon rebelled against his family and the authorities, leaving Naples at 18 and moving to Rome, where he joined the extremist group *Prima Linea* (Front Line), whose participants repeatedly attacked the police and the government during the Lead Years (De Luca, *Alzaia* 68, 81). Having concluded this experience fairly unscathed, De Luca migrated abroad and then to the North to work in construction and as a factory worker before publishing his first fictional work, *Non ora, non qui*, in 1989, at age 39. Since then, he has become a literary sensation as well as one of Italy's most controversial authors, because his unorthodox stances fly in the face of convention, without regard for his own or other people's safety.[32]

Just as significant are De Luca's experiences since then. A fearless climber, he has found in Italy's mountainous northern regions a place to counterbalance his relationship with cities and the sea (De Luca, *Altre* 67–68) but also to meditate on the terse relationship of man with nature. Equally important for his work as a writer and thinker is his philological and etymological study of the Old Testament. De Luca has translated many Old Testament texts, in an extremely literal manner (De Luca, *Una Nuvola* 10), as a way to explore the roots of that quintessential Mediterranean book that is the Hebrew Bible itself but also as a guiding principle to participate in the words of other languages and cultures. Indeed, his understanding of ancient Hebrew as a language of origins suggests a desire to recover the commonality of the human experience through a linguistic approach to reality and the primordial sense of unity that predated the separation into national languages following Babel (ibid. 14). As Scuderi notices, this correspondence between language and reality is meant not symbolically but in the "fusion between word and thing" (ibid. 57),[33] as is also suggested by the protagonist of *Aceto, arcobaleno* (1992), De Luca's second novel: "I studied Mediterranean alphabets to augment my catalog of signs and to understand all the writing that had been sown. In between the starry dots of the universe, our ancestors imagined figures, animals, dippers, whereas I found alphabet lines. The world was written, the first man did not invent names, he read them. Matter still carries residual traces of that draft, monograms that have resisted a general erasure" (De Luca, *Aceto* 13). Later, in the same novel, he makes this connection pertain, more specifically, to the confluence of natural signs and the Hebrew alphabet: "I looked above at the well-known stars: the lynx, the lesser dog, the bull, the swan [. . .] Where astronomers saw animals by connecting dots, I read letters of the Hebrew alphabet. The cart of *Ursa major* was the *waw*, Orion the *aleph* and Cassiopeia the *nun*: together the three formed the root of the verb 'to void.' I loved alphabets, prime matter in the infinite drafting of words" (ibid. 59).

This correspondence between a language of origins and reality explains De Luca's fascination with Hebrew, but it also moors any discourse that explores the "Mediterranean" roots of his writing. He explains this connection in discussing the *funi sommerse* (submerged ropes) that bind areas and people of the Mediterranean past and present to each other:

> Submerged ropes are the opposite of the genealogical tree. There are those who trace them for centuries and those who don't know their mother's name.
>
> I don't go further back than a great-grandfather with fast hands and a fast knife [. . .] I make up for my obscure origins by replacing genealogical trees with the submerged rope to which colonies of marine fossils, of Mediterranean lineages attach themselves through time. The more our origins are obscure, the richer must have been the mixings of bloods with the hundreds of people who invaded us. We are the South, people born on the most beautiful shores on earth, with smoke stacks and refineries on the seafront and oil gummed into the sand [. . .] We who are submerged ropes of the Mediterranean have this in common. (*Altre* 15–16) [34]

The roots of history, which in language suggest a passage from the one to the many—from an Ur-language based in the equivalency between letters and things to a contemporary language that lacks in precision—can be traced, for De Luca, back to the languages and people of the Middle East. In biblical Hebrew, he projects a sense of community with the people of the Mediterranean that works both diachronically and synchronically. The Bible thus becomes a pretext for reflections not only on the literality and etymology of words but also on the origins of the people who have come together on the shores of this flood basin.

This occurs at the level of both aesthetics and practice. De Luca's translation work inserts itself in a tradition that has made communicability an essential component of life in the Mediterranean for millennia, as he suggests in the many references to the story of Babel. From the translations of biblical commentators to those of the Septuaginta, and from the work of Jewish merchants and traders to the translation into Arabic of Plato and Aristotle—and the successive translations into Latin of these same texts and of major Arab treatises by Jewish scholars in the courts of Cordoba and Palermo—the Mediterranean has been the catalyst for exchanges of ideas that, flowing over its porous borders, have brought together the people of its shores, overcoming boundaries and enmities. And De Luca understands language and its midrashic excavation (whether it occurs through translation or the constant reelaboration of perspectives on a theme) as the tool with which to bring to the surface the common threads of the human experience.

Not surprisingly, his fictional and essayistic texts are often imbued with an underlying, "submerged" discourse about a way to be human that he believes is essentially geographical and Mediterranean. In this multiverse, De Luca's voice not only focuses on the Mediterranean, its proximities, and contrasts to build narratives but also uses them as interlocutors to remind us that, even if a story is not *about* Naples, the South, or Italy's Mediterranean connections, it is still a narration *from* the South and therefore influenced by a deep-seated rootedness in its millenary traditions. For example, in *Aceto, arcobaleno*, the reflections of an old man on three friendships he has had in his life (i.e., with a former political organizer turned terrorist/assassin, with a missionary priest to Africa, and with a homeless man who chose to live his life as a guest of other people) are interspersed with observations about the South that would seem only marginally related to the narration's themes ("I'm from a southern city, one of those cities that go up in flames the last night of every year," [10]; "I am at least this, a southern man, one who as a child experienced the most beautiful days on earth and who, under the sun, has seen misery clearer than elsewhere" [22]; and many more). This repeated and emphatic assertion of one's ties to the South, even where it does not directly address the thematic content of stories, suggests that the region's landscape is central to the author's understanding of reality.

This possibility is suggested by De Luca's repeated references to southern connections with people living either in the Mediterranean basin or in other Souths of the world. Thus, during the bombing of Belgrade, he establishes

ties through generations and geographies with men who survived World War II—"In Belgrade, I sought older people [. . .] Sitting on a bench in Kelemedgan Park, after a brief introduction between southerners (Yugoslav is Slav of *jug*, the south), a Neapolitan man used his little Russian to listen" (De Luca, *Pianoterra* 25)[35]—a bond similar to the one that the fisherman Nicola in the novel *Tu, mio* (1998), experienced when, stationed in Sarajevo during World War II, he helped a Muslim family recover the body of their murdered son ("He had heard the women mourn death with the same loud shrieks cried by the island women, he felt he was home. When the sea brings the drowned to shore: that's what those women did with the boy shot by a firing squad because he was a '*partizan*,'" [ibid. 13]). These connections emerge in other circumstances, whether it is between the northern African Mustafà and the labor organizer in *Non ora, non qui*—"[Mustafà owned] a music cassette with songs by a compatriot of his called Bhar, which means 'sea.' I would blow the H well and pronounced the name almost like him. I enjoyed knowing another name for our sea. He would laugh when I told him" (ibid. 24)—or between Naples and Italy's South with Tanzania, the African country where De Luca spent eight months.[36]

This repetition of stories, themes, and situations is a characteristic of De Luca's writing that confirms his need to recover the original, deeper meaning of words. Themes that occur in essays and newspaper entries repeatedly find their way into fictional narratives and poetic output, a process that underscores the amendment and tweaking of a story's content by an author who constantly revisits his relationship to events in different, diachronic contexts. On the one hand, this reexploration of the situations and themes in fictional, poetic, and essayistic format suggests a questioning of reality and its apprehension. On the other, it is a precious component both of a "wasteful" theory of writing that is centered on an "impossible reunion with one's origins" (Scuderi 39–46, 44) and of the need to find the "submerged ropes" that connect the generations and people of the Mediterranean to each other.

This practice is most visible in De Luca's work on the texts of the Old Testament. In the recovery of "original" Hebrew meanings within the context of the Tanakh and its concordances (De Luca says that he uses not a vocabulary but rather a concordance to the text to explore the uses of words and their three-lettered roots) (De Luca, *Kohèlet* 15), there is a desire to return to the essential nature of communication, be it with and from God or, more mundanely, among human beings. Additionally, the practice of commenting on the book, and of revisiting the same concepts time and again in his writings, resembles the work of the Hebrew commentators on the Bible, as he himself is aware (De Luca, *Una Nuvola* 10). De Luca is also conscious that he lives in a time when these meanings have been despoiled of their depth and cultural connotations. This leads to characteristics of his writing that many critics have underscored: the reworking of linguistic terms and ideas (within the same book or between books); a painstaking attention to meaning; and, finally, "a slowness of language soaked in space and time, built on things and places [. . .] The slowness of his expressive instrument becomes symbolic of

a presently rare search for exactitude and fidelity to the mystery of life and creation, it becomes the affirmation of an exercise in precision and resistance to the oftentimes superficial speed typical of the modern (or postmodern) rhythm of our world" (Scuderi 52–53). This excavation into the meaning of words is, for De Luca, intensely geographical: "[This sea's] beautiful languages all came to light, some were erased and others yet will rise to clamor in its markets and books. What won't emerge is a single tongue that will force the Mediterranean into an esperanto. To understand each other, we who belong to this sea will always need a certain slowness" (*Altre* 15); and "I love these clothes made of Italian language, I love dialects, their precision and variety, the ability to switch registers with just one word. I am not sure if my books are careful in their use of language, but they are cookies that have been soaked in the lustral waters of our country" (ibid. 40).

The desire to slow down words and assign them the ability to illuminate life and create the world emerges understatedly in the Neapolitan writer's early work. The opening salvo of his resistance to the devaluing speed of modernity is already present in *Non ora, non qui*, De Luca's first novel, where he provides astute descriptions of the mental and emotional changes that a young boy and the city experienced as Naples emerged from the destruction and rubble of the war, changes that undermined and transformed the pace of the city, not always for the better: "I saw something happening to the city [. . .] I knew it from my narrow street as a static city, layered, overcrowded. I knew the eternal feverish activity of those who no longer want to be poor. But a new frenzy emerged at skin level, a call to hurry up. Without any apparent reason, the poor burned with urgency [. . .] Hurry up! On the sidewalks people didn't give way, take their hats off in salute or avoid the police. The poor had discarded the good manners of patience and fear, they dressed better" (De Luca, *Non ora* 11).[37] In a later interview, De Luca evinces the awareness that Naples, after World War II, changed and became a city wherein a different rhythm prevailed from the one that governed its past, possibly propitiated by the arrival of the American fleet in the Bay of Naples:

> Naples in the postwar years was commercially cut off from its sea, amputated from the sea understood as a source of economic wellbeing [. . .] The presence of the Sixth fleet of the US Navy, stationed in its gulf, certainly deprived it of its sea [. . .] In those years, Naples was overcome by haste [. . .] In the end, there have been two impressive accelerations in Naples' modern history. The first was caused by industrialization with the arrival of the steel mills; the second began after the earthquake of 1980. That's when the haste emerged that ensured that Naples would catch up with other Italian cities. (cited in Scuderi 123–124)

The acceleration imparted by modernity to already chaotic and overcrowded daily interactions causes, for De Luca, a significant loss for the cultural makeup of the city. Already, in *Non ora, non qui*, the protagonist had rued this transformation, not only because it brought a decay in manners, but also because it was a watershed moment in Naples's existence as a southern

city. In the essay *"Più sud che nord"* (1995), now in *Pianoterra*, De Luca suggests that the world does not conform to the equator in a geographical division between North and South; instead, the South of the world "for now has settled on the southern shore of the Mediterranean" (*Pianoterra* 48). Naples and the regions below the Volturno had once belonged to this geo-political definition of the South, in part due to the emigration of their people to the Americas and in part because they provided the workforce for mining and steel industries as well as child labor for a number of other commercial concerns in Italy. When oil tankers in the 1950s occupied the Bay of Naples and brought petrol to new refineries, these came to complement the steel mills that dotted the most "beautiful gulfs of the Tyrrhenian and Ionian Seas with towers," which no longer protected the South from the Saracens but "were the blast furnaces of constant casting, the metallurgy of heavy indus-try" (ibid. 49). In those days, Italy's southerners were happy to still be "the South": "We were the Southern Question, but the tones of the local ruling classes were those of Lenten petitioners. For lunch we were served the *Cassa del Mezzogiorno*, a box of candied laxatives that fed us for five minutes and immediately after caused the dysentery of unemployment" (ibid.).

The earthquake of 1980 changed everything. The international and gov-ernment aid that came in response to the catastrophe (three thousand people died and three hundred thousands were evacuated from their homes) engen-dered a change in Naples and the South: "The aid ended in many hands, people wanted to get rich fast; many limited and unlimited companies were created that sprayed around blood and many small businesses. Fresh for-tunes, cursed in their origins, were quickly accumulated. That's what capi-talism does when it's healthy" (ibid.). Behind them was the long hand of speculation and the underworld, which represents the new bourgeoisie of the South, a bourgeoisie that wants to normalize its position and enjoy the newly gained respectability of money (which, for De Luca, represents the new southern question). As a result, Naples and its people have lost the pre-rogative of calling themselves "South" and must deal instead with "a mobile South" represented by the dispossessed immigrants, legal and not, who now crowd their cities: "Our train stations, prisons, bridges, underpasses and traf-fic lights bring this South to our homes. We are no longer it. To call ourselves that today is an abuse of latitude and an improper usurpation of geography [. . .] We must tender our resignation from that honored name [. . .] We have become a nuance of the North" (ibid. 50).

De Luca believes that there no longer exists a cultural, economic, and political southernness to Italy. Given this bleak panorama, what Italians can embrace is "a southern soul"—a psychological, aesthetic, and cultural per-spective that was once theirs and that allows one's soul "to be displayed southward, toward midday" (ibid.). As we have seen, in the author's aesthetic project this is achieved in a number of ways. At the level of language, it is achieved by embracing the recurring category of *spreco* (wastefulness, excess), though we prefer to call it *scarto* (waste, residue, variant, swerve, excess)—thus the repetition of key words in his opus and the playfulness of a linguistic

register that moves from Italian into Neapolitan *in primis* as well as German, Hebrew, Serbo-Croatian, and Yiddish (in search for intersections between the different languages and reality but also to excavate the wisdom contained in dialects and older languages). At the thematic level, it is achieved through the reflective and at times nostalgic remembrance of things past, especially as they pertain to the proletarian neighborhoods of Naples, the Naples of his ancestors, and the life of fishermen in the island of Ischia. Finally, in his essays and poetry, it is achieved through a forward-looking "Southernization" of outlooks, in the implicit and explicit parallels that De Luca draws between the "mobile Souths" (whether in Italy or elsewhere) and the psychological and mental Souths of those who, like him, wish to imbue future generations with the positive values they can trace back to southern ways of thinking.

Following *Pianoterra*, two novels allow us to underscore further dimensions of the author's aesthetic project. In the first one, *Tu, mio*, the narrator reconstructs his coming of age on the island of Ischia in the 1950s. Central to the plot are the protagonist's interactions with a middle-aged fisherman, Nicola, who imparts on him his knowledge of the sea, and the relationship that he establishes with an older foreign girl, who sees him as the vessel for communicating with her father, a Rumanian Jew who died in the concentration camps. The boy's relationship with Nicola focuses on the concept of "virility," a way of carrying one's self with integrity that De Luca believes has been lost by most of his contemporaries. As the narrator learns by helping them throughout the summer, Nicola and his fellow fishermen relate symbiotically to the Tyrrhenian Sea they inhabit. They respect its power, and they fish its waters for a living, never taking more than the sea is willing to give. The boy thus learns that virility is not associated with sexual experimentation with prostitutes, nor with drunken US seamen who fight in the streets of Naples. It consists instead of "a job, a measured behavior among others and under the sun. It was the balance one held standing in a moving boat, a paucity of words, crusted salt [. . .] Virility was a certain indifference to physical pain, ignoring one's bleeding body that only needed some sea salt as disinfectant" (De Luca, *Pianoterra* 30–31). The sea and the fishermen thus embody lessons in moral and ethical ways of living that the boy does not find in those around him.

More complex is the relationship with the older girl Caia, who lives in Switzerland and is rumored to have been born in Rumania. Significantly, it is Nicola who provides the boy with clues to her past, when he suggests that her real name might be Haia or Haiele (meaning "alive" in Hebrew), a name that he often heard when he was stationed in Yugoslavia during World War II. Gradually, the girl reveals, only to the boy, that her family had died in the Nazi concentration camps and that she believes her father is using the boy to communicate with and look over her. The boy comes to identify with the absent father, sublimating his feelings for the girl and turning into Haia's guardian angel. So when she erupts in anger at a group of German tourists who had begun to sing the hymn of the Nazi SS in a restaurant, he rises in her defense and plots to light fire to the house and car they rented on the

island. Though aware that the "exploding fire could not redress the wrongs of the past" (ibid. 114), the act symbolically seals his rite of passage into adulthood, while at the same time revealing the impossibility of correcting history's injustices and preserving intact the world of his youth.[38]

Tu, mio reveals both a nostalgic rewriting of the past and the awareness that past human history cannot be rewritten. *Tre cavalli* (1999) offers a different dimension to the author's concerns. The protagonist is a former factory worker who fell in love with a Jewish Argentinean woman he met while rock climbing in the Trentino and with whom he moved to Argentina, where they fought against the *Juntas* before she became one of the *desparecidos* ("disappeared"—people eliminated by the dictators who ran Argentina in the 1970s). He then embarked on a sailboat as its cook, landed in Puerto Soledad on the Falkland Islands, living there for many years with the owner of a small inn, and boarded a ship to England and moved back to Italy, where he now works as a landscaper in the yard of a former coworker. As he reads and expatiates on his work and the rhythm of the seasons, he meets Laila, a prostitute with whom he initiates a new love story, and the African immigrant Selim, whom he befriends and allows to cut and sell yellow mimosa flowers from the yard to eke out a living. In exchange, Selim, who carries the wisdom of African medicine men, will read in the ashes "of the trees that love you and whose words give you this last gift" (De Luca, *Tre cavalli* 72) that the protagonist must leave again, or his future will be filled with blood. What this blood consists of is revealed when Laila tells him that she wants to murder her pimp once the latter threatens to kill her or hurt those she loves. As the protagonist prepares to take her place and resume the life of murder he had left behind, he is anticipated by Selim, who kills the man to repay his debt of kindness and then disappears forever.

The novel addresses a number of concerns in De Luca's writing. For one, the landscaper/reader of books/protagonist interprets his experience and that of others through his knowledge of vegetation and dendrology: "We learn alphabets and we don't know how to read trees. Oaks are novels, pines grammars, vines psalms, creepers proverbs, firs are harangues by the defense, cypresses by the prosecution, rosemary is a song, bay leaves are prophecies" (ibid. 34). Additionally, he reveals how the *sprechi* (excesses) of language often lead to a deeper understanding of human truths. For example, as he relates the story of a Kurd coworker who had been beaten up by the police, the protagonists explains that the absence of a single letter led him to an ironic realization. The man's eyes are injured in the beating: "The English word is '*eyes.*' An omission on the piece of paper changes it to '*yes.*' As a result of the beating his 'yesses' are defective. There's truth in this mistake. All his yesses are defective, since he seldom replies in the affirmative to my offers [. . .] Beatings ruin a man's yesses more than they ruin his eyes. There are mistakes that contain a different truth" (ibid. 17). Though seemingly inconsequential to the narration, the anecdote provides a symbolical mooring for the novel's deeper themes, which are about the relationship between power and the subaltern, be they the Kurd beaten up by an authoritarian state, the

protagonist fighting the Argentinean *juntas*, the prostitute rebelling against the power of her pimp, or the African immigrant who makes do with the generosity of strangers.

In *Tre cavalli*, the concerns expressed in De Luca's essays heavily influence the fiction. Indeed, the narrator repeatedly questions his own perception of reality vis-à-vis a past that no longer is and confronts it with a knowledge that belongs now to others (in Argentina, Africa, and other regions of the world's "South"), as evinced, just before the novel's denouement, in a conversation with the bar owner who had first welcomed him back to Italy:

> He talks about a home on the sea where he would like to retire. I tell him that I too think of a home on the coast, with a window facing east and a bower facing south. For me, the west and the north are behind one's shoulders.
>
> "For me the west," he says, "is my father's back as he departs for the Americas. I still see him boarding the ship and disappearing west, forever. We no longer live these kinds of lives, now they are the lives of others who arrive here wherever there isn't a port. Funny, isn't it? Even those who have a passport do not come through our ports. That's why I offer them a place to sit and food to eat." (ibid. 102)

Here, being southern is no longer the purview of Italians, who, for the most part, have turned their backs on the Souths of the world. In traveling west, previous generations of Italians have ensured that they "no longer live" like southerners. Now the best Italians can do is welcome those who are other and recapture in their spirit a sense of their own traditions and history.

De Luca does not offer hopes for an Italian southern redemption in the worlds he describes. Like Consolo's, his fiction teems with loss. The protagonists of *Non ora, non qui* and *Aceto, arcobaleno* either die or inhabit a decaying world. In his coming-of-age stories (*Tu, mio* but also *Montedidio* and *Il giorno prima della felicità*), the protagonists commit crimes (arson and murder) that affect their futures, while other characters disappear, suffocated by the weight of history's past. In *Tre cavalli*, although the protagonist is spared a return to his killing ways, the novel ends with the death of the pimp at the hands of Selim, suggesting that even the "mobile Souths" are stuck in the negative recourses of history. What is left is a world that cannot be rescued but where individuals can carry on heroic existences, akin to Consolo's heroic melancholia, defending simple moral obligations toward the other, society, and its traditions.

De Luca suggests that this might be the only avenue open to a post-southern Italy in an interview with Aldo Cazzullo, whose book, *L'Italia de' noantri. Come siamo tutti diventati meridionali* (2009), claims that there exists no longer a northern and southern Italy but rather an Italy where everyone has become "Southern": Italy's North is just like its South, since tax evasion, underground/illegal economies, congested traffic, the control of prostitution, drugs, and political blackmailing by the *Camorra* and the *'Ndrangheta* are no longer the sole purview of the backward South but

extend to the whole peninsula. In his retort, De Luca turns Cazzullo's argument on its head, suggesting that "today, Naples is just an undertone of the North [. . .] But I don't think this is the result of a Southernization of the country. I believe instead that it is a result of a terrible, inexorable drift caused by business profiteering" from the North (cited in Roncone 99). He then takes exception with the title of Cazzullo's last chapter ("La speranza"), claiming that one should not "inconvenience" such a feeling, because "in cases like these, hope is an obstacle" to action. Instead, De Luca advocates that renewed attention be paid to "those Italians who operate behind the scenes; Italians who, every day, work hard, trying to be correct, honest, fair, supportive of others . . . Italians who, for these reasons alone, I would tend to call heroic" (ibid. 100).[39]

This perspective emerges with greater clarity in two poetry collections—*Opera sull'acqua* and *Solo andata*—and the theatrical/lyrical piece *L'ultimo viaggio di Sindbad. Opera sull'acqua* (2002) begins by exploring the Bible's creation story as the "wind of Elohím breathes on the essence of water" (De Luca, *Opera* 7), "dividing in two" the liquidity of the universe in an "above and below of water, with the firmament in between" (ibid. 10). Other poems in the collection attest to the power of water to terrify and surprise human beings, from the drowning of Jewish babies in the Nile and the subsequent drowning of Egyptian troops in the Red Sea in "Passaggio" (ibid. 11–12), to the transformation of water into wine at Cana in "L'intruso" (ibid. 13), the stories of the Vajont in "Diga" (ibid. 14), the Serbian-Bosnian war in "Fiumi di guerra" (ibid. 15), and Jonah's rebellion and sacrifice for the safety of his fellow travelers in the Bible in "Affondi," though the latter ends with a reminiscence of the author's friends who died in the Tyrrhenian Sea ("others, among those I call my own, drowned / born with the heredity of asphyxia. / Massimo, Eliana, youths on the Tyrrhenian, bodies that sank / offered in gift / to give light to jellyfish, in their pelvises the sole hid itself / and the mother-of-pearl that blooms in the corals attached itself to the bones of their feet" [ibid. 17–18]). The power of water, and especially Mediterranean waters, emerges even more clearly in two poems dealing with immigration, "Naufragi" (ibid. 19) and "Natale" (ibid. 33–34). The first succinctly points out the negative impact of Italian immigration policies: "In the channels of Otranto and Sicily / migratory birds without wings, African and Eastern peasants / drown in the waves' hollow. / One out of ten trips ends snagged on the bottom, / the bag of seeds sowing the furrow / dug up by the anchor, not by the plow. / The mainland of Italy is now closedland. / To deny them, we let them go down" (ibid. 19). The second highlights the practice of sailors to name stillborn children delivered on ships Jesus before giving them burial at sea ("in the holds with clandestine travelers / [. . .] / their mother on ship to escape something or try her luck, / their father an hourly angel / for whom paternity lasts only this long" [33]). Removed from the world of fiction, De Luca's writing becomes more pointedly bitter, and by focusing on groups that belong to the lower rungs of society (peasants, children), he reveals who are the true victims of Italy's misguided policies.

L'ultimo viaggio di Sindbad (2003) builds on the themes presented in *Opera sull'acqua*. If in the poetic anthology the ties between biblical stories, Mediterranean and Italian narratives, and the plight of immigrants had seemed impressionistic, the theatrical format gives De Luca's voice a coherence that the poetry lacked. Sindbad is an odd choice as the play's main character, because the stories comprising the cycle of Sindbad eschew the Mediterranean and take place in the seas east of Africa and south of Asia. De Luca is aware of this discrepancy, as he makes clear in the preface: "I have written a Mediterranean Sindbad, more an insomniac than an immortal character, coeval with the sea of Jonah, the prophet swallowed alive by the whale, and with the sea of the Italian immigrants of the twentieth century, swallowed live by the Americas" (*L'ultimo* 3). Sindbad is thus a transhistorical and transliterary, but also transmigrational, figure that brings together different strands of De Luca's Mediterranean world and of the world's Souths as they have emerged in his poetics: the Neapolitan immigrants departing for the Americas (ibid. 11–12); and the merchant Jonah, who, having left Jaffa to escape the will of God, gifted himself to the storm-ridden Mediterranean (and its inopportune whale) to appease Elohìm and save the ship's crew from drowning (ibid. 17–19); but also Mishka Japoncik, the "Robin Hood of Odessa" (ibid. 22); and Saul/Paul of Tarsus, who, traveling as a prisoner on a ship bound for Rome to be beheaded ("Saints must lose their heads"), was shipwrecked on Malta with the boat's crew (ibid. 23–24).

In the play, Sindbad captains a ship whose business is to ferry immigrants illegally to Italy. As he welcomes his cargo, his remarks are tinged with cruel irony: "You will remain in the hold of the ship the whole trip. One man at a time will be allowed on deck for one hour a day. No women [. . .] I am the captain who will help you come to shore in the West, to civilization. You'll see what civilization! What welcomes!" (ibid. 7). During the trip, he is harsh toward his passengers. For example, to a sailor who tells him a pregnant woman wishes to have a baby on deck, he replies, "She can unload her weight, but she's not coming out of the hold" (ibid. 8); he orders the boatswain to throw the deserter/Jonah off the ship (ibid. 22–23) but is wistful about previous emigrations he has witnessed ("Back then lives would separate on the piers, people exchanged truthful goodbyes, certain they would never see each other again" [ibid. 13]). Only after the ship has a close encounter with the Italian coast guard authorities who want to turn around ships carrying illegal immigrants (Sindbad instructs his sailors to throw nets in the sea and pretend they are fishermen; to their surprise, their nets fill with fish, so they even have food to share with their starving cargo, a reference to the Gospels' story of the multiplication of the fish) does the captain's attitude toward the clandestine voyagers change. So at the beginning of the second act, he organizes a festive dinner and dance in the hold of the ship, as the crew and its cargo eat the fish and dance a *tarantella* based on the verse, from *Ecclesiastes*, "All the rivers flow to the sea but the sea is never full" (1.7). This descent in the bowels of the ship has the effect of humanizing the people below for the captain. Sindbad thus decides not to jump ship with his crew

(the normal praxis in these cases, so the migrants are left to their own destinies and the crew cannot be accused of illegal human trafficking) but stays with the migrants until the very end, knowing that their destiny has already been written: "More wasted than fresh water in the sea are these people we carry who will be turned back. There's need of them on land, but they're thrown back to the sea" (ibid. 45). And after the crew departs, he remains with the rudderless ship as a new coast guard patrol boat approaches it, threatening dire consequences if its men are not allowed onboard. Mindful that, either way, the people in the hold are condemned, Sindbad sits with them and narrates stories from *One Thousand and One Nights* (ironically commenting that Scheherazade told stories because back then they could save lives) as the ship is bombed and eventually hit by the shells of the patrol boat ("a greater bang lights the scene, then everything turns dark" [ibid. 49]).

Sindbad's sacrifice is not a hopeful sacrifice: it does not suggest redemption or happy endings. It is, however, imbued with the values (honor, integrity, compassion) that De Luca's protagonists strive to achieve. Sindbad represents a heroic embracing of the other in a world—the northern shores of the Mediterranean, Italy's unfriendly borderlands—where the other is too often left to her devices, if not sent back to endure punishments and deprivations. The captain, drawn to the Mediterranean from the southern seas of the world, carries within his sacrifice the heroic resistance to a North whose globalized policies now overwhelm the Italian Peninsula. This witnessing on behalf of the other is what is left to De Luca as a writer, even as he recommends greater participation and acts of heroism from himself and other Italians. This is the meaning of *Solo andata: righe che vanno troppo spesso a capo*, (2005), a book that brings together the one-act choral performance that gives the book its title with poems on other subjects. In the introductory note/poem, De Luca explains the title: "The coasts of the Mediterranean split / between those of departure and those of arrival, without evenness: / more beaches and nights for boarding; fewer for landing, / as fewer of the living reach Italy than the many that board the ship. / What alters the equation? Bad luck and us, Italians, as part of it, / though *Italia* is an open word, full of air" (De Luca, *Solo andata* 7). Indeed, for many migrants, the trip to Italy becomes a one-way voyage, either because they die in transit or because they have no "home" to reach, as one voice points out: "[They say] You must return home. If I had one, I would have never left. / But not even the assassins want us. / Put us back on a ship, shoo us off like men, / we are not baggage that you can send back; you, North, are unworthy of yourself / [. . .] / You can ward us off, not take us back, / our departures are scattered ashes, we are one way voyages" (ibid. 34). Yet, as the poet notices through the chorus of immigrant voices, the stale and superficial country that Italy has become needs these new arrivals to rejuvenate itself physically and culturally: "We will be your servants, give birth to children you don't, / our lives will be your adventure books. / We bring with us Homer and Dante, the blind man and the pilgrim, / the fragrances you've lost, the equality you have repressed" (ibid. 35).

The poem's ending, like this chapter's, is open to interpretation. In part, it reveals that immigrants are a commodity that Italians can even use to refresh themselves genetically. Alternately, it suggests that the immigrants who have crossed deserts and seas to reach Italy bring with them, as we will see in Chapter 7, new epics of storytelling (Homer and Dante) that fill the country with lost "fragrances." More important, they force Italians to confront the corruption of their values. Only by standing up in defense of equality, whether it is for the subaltern Muslim, African, or Kurd immigrant or for those who are jailed unjustly (the second half of *Solo andata* contains poems dedicated to political prisoners currently residing in jails in Italy and abroad), can Italians regain the moral ground they have lost. In the end, we are all responsible for the corruption of values that has overcome the northern shore of the Mediterranean. Only by coming together and drawing on the submerged hawsers that run below the seas can we stand witness for lost traditions and enable, through the acceptance of the other, at least a moral rebirth of a now lost nation.

CHAPTER 7

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THE MEDITERRANEAN OF
MIGRANT, POSTCOLONIAL,
AND EXILE WRITERS

By the mid-1970s, Italy, which like Greece, Portugal, and Spain had been
one of Southern Europe's traditional out-migration countries, became a des-
tination for individuals who crossed the Mediterranean from the Strait of
Gibraltar between Morocco and Spain, the Channel of Sicily between Tunisia
and Sicily, and the Channel of Otranto between Albania and the Adriatic
coast. At that time, the migrants registered on Italian soil amounted to less
than 150,000, but by 1997, their number had increased to over a million.
Today, the dossiers of Caritas/Migrantes estimate that close to five million
emigrants reside on Italian soil (*Immigrazione Dossier* 57).[1] Nationalistic
myths and strict legislative measures to control borders and reinforce fron-
tiers soon followed, but by the early 1990s, migrants started to claim a pres-
ence in the Italian literary landscape, giving voice to the many ties that bind
people across the sea and questioning normative definitions of "Italianness"
to greatly enrich present-day discourses on Italy and the Mediterranean.

ITALY: A MEDITERRANEAN MIGRANT
"RESERVOIR" TURNED "DESTINATION"

Reflecting on the transformation of the Mediterranean basin from its tra-
ditional role as a reservoir of out-migration, Russell King lists a number of
contributing factors to these "South-North" and "East-West" crossings: the
limits placed on labor migrants by northern European states since 1974 that
redirected the flow toward Southern Europe; the troubled condition of the
Balkans and Eastern Europe after the collapse of communism; the economic
and political upheavals of many former European colonies in the Middle
East and in Saharan and sub-Saharan Africa during the post–Cold War era;
the rising prosperity levels of traditional out-migration countries following

membership in the European Union; and the concomitant need for low-wage jobs increasingly shunned by natives ("Troubled passage" 4–5).

Italians, however, perceived the unprecedented arrivals of large numbers of individuals from the South(s) of the world as a foreign invasion that threatened a presumed Italian homogeneity of culture and way of life.[2] This fueled a reactive mythology of national identity based on imaginary notions of shared civic values, territorial belonging, and even a common ethnicity that resulted in many episodes of violence and brutality. The media attention to the murder of South African refugee Jerry Masslo on August 24, 1989, at Villa Literno (near Caserta)[3] forced Italians to acknowledge the new reality of in-migration and the racist and ethnophobic responses it was eliciting. Nationally televised broadcasts, such as *Nonsolonero*, *Un Mondo a Colori*, and *Shukran*, informed the public of the need to deal with this phenomenon, but the mainstream press continued to emphasize "the different ethnic origins of immigrants [. . .] identified as 'foreigners,' 'North Africans' or 'Albanians,' and hence distinguished from 'Us,' 'Italians,' 'Europeans'" (Triandafyllidou 106). This rhetoric developed into legislative acts that restricted entry and fortified frontiers.[4] From its first program to regularize immigration in 1986, which up to that point was still based on fascist legislation from the 1930s, Italy enacted a number of restrictive laws (e.g., Martelli Law of 1990 and Turco-Napolitano Law of 1998) that culminated in the Bossi-Fini Immigration Law of July 30, 2002. Throughout, the government granted amnesties—called *sanatorie*, from the verb *sanare* ("to heal")—whose rhetoric of sickness frames migration as an infection that needs to be cured in order to restore the national body's health (Di Maio 149; Parati, "Strangers" 119).

The laws themselves are designed to aid the national economy, since they establish labor quotas, require a clean criminal record, restrict immigration to those with work contracts, limit families' reunifications, and stipulate that housing be provided by the employer. Moreover, since these laws are based on an understanding of migration as a temporary phenomenon, they allow the children of migrants born on Italian soil, known as second generation or "G2s," to become citizens only if they can prove uninterrupted residence in Italy from birth to 18 years of age and they apply within a year of their eighteenth birthday. By contrast, descendants of Italian emigrants abroad can claim the *ius sanguinis*, a right that goes back to the Codice Pisanelli of 1865 (Tintori 745), and obtain citizenship if they can demonstrate the existence of a single ancestor who never renounced Italian nationality. There are neither generational limits to apply for citizenship under the provision of this law nor obligations to reside in Italy for any period of time, and since 2001, even third- or fourth-generation descendants can cast their votes in the national elections from abroad. Aside from the paradoxical asymmetries that govern these different paths to citizenship, Italian migration laws are highly repressive for individuals outside the Schengen zone. Despite Italy's endorsement of the supra- if not postnational models of political, economic, and cultural integrations of the European Union as well as of various International Human Rights edicts, the country has held fast to normative cartographies

of state sovereignty. Its laws mandate police fingerprinting for all non-EU citizens (even those legally entitled to be on Italian soil) and justify confining clandestine migrants in centers of temporary permanence (CPT) and their successors, the *Centri di Identificazione ed Espulsione* (CIE), as bodies to be controlled and circumscribed. In doing so, these laws subsume human life to a juridical and institutional model as "politically qualified life" and transform the migrant and the nonnational into the *non habet personam*: the "nonperson"—the "bare life" of the "state of exception" (Agamben, *Homo Sacer* 7).[5] In short, the Italian legislative system recognizes the person in terms of a shared juridical and political space only, giving precedence to legal as opposed to human rights while providing a rationale for the forms of control and discipline exercised by the modern state.

The peak of Italy's ill-conceived immigration policies was reached with the Rome-Tripoli agreement of 2005. Signed by former prime minister Silvio Berlusconi and Libya's Muammar Gaddafi, the agreement reflects the European Union's widening, in 2003, of external boundaries and political authority beyond the territorial perimeters of its frontiers.[6] In a concerted effort to stem migratory flows, immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers from Saharan and sub-Saharan Africa as well as the Horn of Africa who travel through Libya to reach the Mediterranean Sea can be intercepted both on the traditionally free space of the high seas and on land. At sea, vessels can be inspected by Italian-Libyan patrols just on the suspicion that their passengers are unwanted migrants. If they are, they are placed in detention centers, such as the infamous one on the island of Lampedusa.[7] When intercepted on land, migrants are confined in detention centers in Libya, three of which are financed by Italy. From there, many are deported to the edge of the desert in containers and left to their own devices. The 2005 agreement has claimed hundreds of lives.[8] Even after the forced resignation of Berlusconi, this anti-immigrant apparatus shows no sign of loosening its restrictions. Thousands of individuals continue to traverse the Mediterranean, risking their lives on makeshift vessels known as *navi fantasma* ("ghost ships") and *carrette del mare* ("old carts of the sea"), while the sea is becoming a modern version of the horrific "Middle Passage" (Portelli, "Mediterranean Passage" 296) since many of the vessels shipwreck before reaching shore. And because these boats are the fleet of clandestine trafficking, no death certificates record the names of those who die, while it has become a common occurrence for Mediterranean fishermen to catch human remains in their nets.

Founding Moments of "Italianness": Colonialisms and Global Migrations

Italy's responses to in-migration are especially surprising. Following centuries of settlements and invasions, the peninsula evolved into a mosaic of independent cultures, traditions, and even ethnic identities that, to date, constitute the mosaic of the "Smaller Italies." Yet the constitutive diversity of the Italian Peninsula is also the result of a long history of emigration

and return-migration. This phenomenon was already prominent during the Middle Ages and the renaissance as residents of the peninsula traveled to all regions bordering the Mediterranean Sea and beyond the Alps. These migrations would increase dramatically from the end of the eighteenth century onward, when a "global scattering" of epic proportions took place (Gabaccia 5).

Antonio Gramsci provided an early reflection on this "global scattering" at the outset of *The Southern Question*. There, he observes that Italy's founding moments as a nation-state in 1861—and, by implication, the concept of *Italianità* ("Italianness")—are tied to colonialism and migration (16) since, with the territorial unification of the Italian Peninsula, the independent Kingdom of the Two Sicilies was annexed to a northern Savoy monarchy that, having acquired Liguria at the Congress of Vienna, had demonstrated its colonial ambitions in 1825, when it displayed its power in the waters facing Tripoli and Tunisia (Bosworth 97). Although the African coast proved to be out of reach, southern Italy was not. Within a few decades, Gramsci argues, the Savoy turned the South into a source of natural resources and cheap human labor, having severely weakened its economy through a liberalized agenda based on trade blocks and tariff structures and impoverished the peasantry by eroding rights to collective land use. Such practices went in tandem with a "colonizing" discourse that represented the South as an exotic and bizarre land and, more generally, as framed through the rhetoric of European colonization in Africa, Asia, and the Americas.[9] As the plight of southern peasants worsened, two related phenomena led to yet another turn in Italy's internal colonial history: rebellion and emigration. While some destitute masses fought against the Italian Army in a class-based conflict that would claim more lives than all the battles of unification combined—the so-called *brigantaggio* ("brigandage") we briefly discussed in Chapters 2 and 4—the majority chose the path of mass migration in an exodus that would turn Italy into the largest reservoir of European migrants between 1876 and 1976, with numbers reaching the astonishing figure of 25 million departures. The Americas were a primary destination, but many emigrants also left for French colonial holdings in Africa, such as Algeria and Morocco, but especially Tunisia, where they settled in ports, rural areas, and mining regions stretching from Biserta, Goletta, Monastir, and Sfax to Cape Bon, Gafsa, and Kelibia.[10]

The mass migrations that followed the creation of Italy soon resurfaced in the nation's colonial history, as between 1890 and 1922 the country looked to expand outward toward eastern African territories[11] (and, later, in North Africa, the islands of the Dodecanese archipelago and Albania). These regions were viewed not just as an opportunity to solve the problems caused by an oversupply of labor and a large landless peasantry but also as a means to affirm the legitimacy of the new nation. In 1887, Francesco Crispi became prime minister on a platform of imperial expansion that led to the occupation of Somalia in 1889 and the invasion and declaration of Eritrea as a colony in 1890. Despite many catastrophic defeats (e.g., Amba Alagi, 1895; Adowa, 1896), Italy pursued its colonial ambitions and, by 1912,

proclaimed sovereignty over Cyrenaica and Tripolitania in present-day Libya. It also occupied Rhodes and several islands in the Dodecanese that, as was the case for Cyrenaica and Tripolitania, were provinces of the Ottoman Empire. Albania also became a key component in Italy's attempt to gain control of the central and eastern Mediterranean, since it enabled it to establish hegemony over the Strait of Otranto and access the Balkans. Thus, in 1917, Italy invaded central and southern Albania on the grounds that these regions had been part of not only the Roman Empire but also the republic of Venice and the Kingdom of Naples.

With the fall of the liberal state and the advent of Fascism, Italian colonialism entered its second and most violent phase between 1922 and 1941. While in the Dodecanese islands Cesare De Vecchi, governor from 1936 to 1941, "Italianized" the population "through the use of fascist brute force" (Doumanis 229), in 1939 Mussolini invaded Albania and began to expropriate its natural resources to facilitate the settling of Italian colonists. But it was Africa that felt the full force of fascist violence. To Mussolini, the stability of the African territories had become a top priority to affirm the military strength of the regime, hold in check the French and British neighboring colonies of Egypt and Tunisia, and, in the case of Cyrenaica and Tripolitania, restore the image of Italians as the legitimate heirs of the Roman *mare nostrum* who "were 'returning' to North Africa'" (Fuller 137). In 1925, Mussolini gave free reign to commanders like Rodolfo Graziani, "the butcher of Fezzan [Libya]," to pursue repressive military campaigns, bringing to an end indigenous resistance in Cyrenaica and Tripolitania and leading to the creation of the *Colonia di Libia* ("Libyan Colony") in 1935 and of *Africa Orientale Italiana* ("Italian Eastern Africa") in 1936, a territory that merged the Ethiopian Empire previously ruled by Hailè Selassié with Eritrea and Somalia.

Hopes that this second, external colonization would provide a solution to the problems that had caused the earlier, internal one were short lived. Only three hundred thousand Italians went to Africa while nine million left for the Americas during this period, and this second chapter of Italian colonialism was short lived. The Paris Peace Treaty of 1947 forced Italy to abandon all claims to its colonies (even if it retained the UN-negotiated trusteeship over Somalia, or AFIS, from 1950 to 1960). It thus entered the postcolonial era without the territorial losses that other European colonial powers such as Belgium, France, and Great Britain experienced during the process of postindependence state formation. Nonetheless, Italian migration did not cease in 1947. In the post–World War II era, the preferred destinations shifted toward Europe's North. In the largest European interregional migration of the post–World War II era, two million southerners relocated between 1951 and 1972 to work in the factories of Genoa, Milan, and Turin (Italy's industrial triangle), while an additional three million went abroad, primarily to Belgium, France, Germany, and Switzerland.

Cross-cultural contexts of national and transnational colonialism and migration are thus part and parcel of premodern all the way to contemporary

Italian history. They constitute what Choate has described as the global Italian nation, a transnational "Greater Italy" that originates from subaltern classes, primarily in Italy's South (but also from impoverished areas of the North), and exists outside territorial jurisdiction, with spatial frames of references encompassing central and northern Europe but also Africa, the Middle East, and the Americas. These transnational contexts, however, have been repressed by modern Italian consciousness (Turco 11), and despite much evidence to the contrary, unification has been endlessly narrated, celebrated, and commemorated as a project of collective emancipation and resurgence (hence the word *Risorgimento*) of northern and southern people alike. While there is a long tradition of studies on Italian emigration authored by political scientists, historians, and anthropologists, including the major repository of data contained in *Bollettino dell'emigrazione* (1902 to 1927), the migratory experience of the subaltern has been repressed in Italy, as evidenced by the disregard for the culture that has emerged from the global Italian diaspora. Italian imperial and colonial memory was also bracketed until very recently. Since Italy's loss of its African empire was an injury to national pride as well as an implicit failure of the newly born nation-state, archives were tightly controlled, and with few exceptions,[12] only since the 1980s and 1990s has the chapter on colonialism reopened[13]—but without the public debates necessary for a true decolonization to take place. Meanwhile, mainstream culture has continued to cultivate the idea of Italian colonizers as *brava gente* ("good people") who built roads in Albania and the Dodecanese and improved the urban planning and architecture of the cities of Addis Ababa, Asmara, Bengasi, and Tripoli even though their colonialism was *straccione* ("beggarly") when compared to that of other European empires and, for this reason, more benign.[14] These representations hide not only the violence, usurpation, and racial intolerance of the Italian colonial empire but also its post–Geneva Convention history, which was marred by air strikes on civilians, chemical warfare, mass hangings, and deportations of entire populations to concentration camps, where forced labor, executions, rape, and death by starvation were all too common occurrences.[15]

A Symbolic Emergence

As global migratory movements take place through and within Italy and from all Mediterranean shores, neither the founding (if repressed) moments of "Italianness" nor the plight of those who are escaping poverty, destitution, and political violence can be forgotten. Notwithstanding the rigidity of Italy's legislative measures, the country continues to be the destination of millions of immigrants, who now reside on Italian soil and are permanently reconfiguring its labor markets while their bodies transform urban and suburban squares and train stations, the so-called nonplaces of global modernity.[16] Since the early 1990s, however, as Armando Gnisci recognized before others, these bodies emerged from their nonplaces to inscribe their presence in Italian society through written words.[17] As the newest voices in

the panorama of late twentieth-century Italian literature, they authored or coauthored works that narrated their experiences as migrant laborers, political refugees, and asylum seekers. The more famous among these works were Mohamed Bouchane's *Chiamatemi Alì* (1990, with Carla De Gerolamo and Daniele Miccione), Pap Khouma's *Io venditore di elefanti* (1990, with Oreste Pivetta; translated in an English version as *I Was an Elephant Salesman*), Salah Methnani's *Immigrato* (1990, with Mario Fortunato), Saidou Moussa Ba's *La promessa di Hamadi* (1991, with Alessandro Micheletti), and Nassera Chohra's *Volevo diventare Bianca* (1993, with Alessandra Atti Di Sarro).[18] While the practice of coauthoring raised legitimate questions about linguistic agency and symbolic empowerment,[19] these works were nevertheless "characterized by the desire of the individual to emerge from the mass of undefined and marginalized immigrants, and in so doing to create multifaceted alternative portrayals to the essentialized and homogeneous definition of 'the immigrant' created by prejudice and racism in Italy" (Parati, *Crossroads* 13).

These authors were rapidly followed by a second generation of writers, many highly educated and politically engaged,[20] who emerged from the condition of linguistic subalternity that, for some, had characterized the previous generation's collaborations with Italian authors. In an act of symbolic self-assertion and empowerment, their works evolved into a "performative space of *auctoritas*" (Wright 99) that often extends to the production and distribution of their own written works through digital means.[21] Their names are Fatima Ahmed, Adrian Nazareno Bravi, Ubax Viola Chandra, Christiana de Caldas Brito, Amor Dekhis, Christina Ali Farah, Shirin Ramzanali Fazel, Jadelin Mabiala Gangbo, Gabriella Ghermandi, Anilda Ibrahimi, Kossi Komla-Ebri, Ron Kubati, Amara Lakhous, Tahar Lamri, Mohammed Lamsuni, Genevieve Makaping, Ingy Mubiayi, Carmelo Quijada, Igiaba Scego, Barbara Serdakowski, Maria Abbebù Viarengo, Ornela Vorpsi, Lily-Amber Laila Wadia, Yousef Wakkas, and many others. Some came from former colonial contexts, both Italian and not. Others were born in Italy from a previous generation of migrants. Others still arrived in Italy leaving behind the continuous upheavals taking place in Eastern Europe. Some are Italian citizens; others are not. For some, Italian is the first, second, or third language; others see it as the language of the former colonizer.[22] While this stratification raises questions about where they belong in the literary context, their work, besides bearing witness to the experience of migration in its twofold dimension of emigration and immigration, demands that we respond not just to the migrant other of yesterday and today but also to the subjects impacted by colonialism and the ethnic conflicts occurring at the very footsteps of Italy. Indeed, these writers help us to question normative definition of Italian identity through hybrid experiences that cross borders of space, times, cultures, and traditions. In Sayad's words, they "undermine the epistemologies of 'state thought' by: reveal[ing] in broad daylight the hidden truth and the deepest foundations of the social and political order we describe as national [. . .] 'denaturalizing,' so to speak, what we take to be natural, and 'rehistoricizing' that state and that element within the state that

seems to have been afflicted by historical amnesia [. . .] recalling the social and historical conditions of its genesis" (280).

Before examining their work, we should note that even though testimonies, autobiographies, and fictions are their primary modes of cultural expression (and are, for this reason, the focus of our chapter), other media, from poetry and drama to films, videos, documentaries, and music, are becoming increasingly common. Poetry, which Luigi Bonaffini and Mia Lecomte describe as having developed slowly and unevenly (9), counts among its most significant voices Gëzim Hajdari, whom we will discuss later, but also Hasan Al Nassar, Anahi Baklu, Mihai Mircea Butcovan, Thea Laitef, Egidio Molinas Leiva, Julio Monteiro Martins, Ndjock Ngana Yogo Ndjock, Heleno Oliveira, Lidia Amalia Palazzolo, Candelaria Romero, Barbara Serdakowski, Božidar Stanišić, and Spale Miro Stevanović.[23] The theatrical scene is also quite lively, with drama companies active all over Italy, including *Compagnia del Lazzaretto*, *Cooperativa Teatro Laboratorio*, *Koron Tlé*, *Palcoscenico d'Africa*, and *Teatro delle Albe*.[24] The work of the Afro-Romagnole *Teatro delle Albe* is especially noteworthy. Through interethnic productions, it brings together Italian-born actors and directors with African immigrants. Among the *Albe's* theatrical performances are *Ruh: Romagna più Africa uguale* (1988), *Siamo asini o pedanti?* (1989), *Lunga vita all'albero* (1990), *I ventidue infortuni di Mor Arlecchino* (1993), and *I Polacchi* (1998), which was renamed *Ubu Buur* (2007).[25] As far as the cinematic scene,[26] a small but growing number of migrant directors have released very interesting work. These include *Waalo Fendo* (1997), by the Senegalese Saidou Moussa Ba in collaboration with Algerian Mohammed Soudani; Algerian Rachid Benhadj's *L'albero dei destini sospesi* (1997); Albanian Edmond Budina's *Lettere al vento* (2002); Tunisian Moshen Melliti's *Io, l'altro* (2007); and Moroccan Mohamed Zineddaine's *Risveglio* (2002) and *Ti ricordi di Adil?* (2011). Some films by Turkish-born Ferzan Ozpetek, including *Hamam* (1997), *Harem suaré* (1999), and *Le fate ignoranti* (2001), are worth mentioning, though they focus mostly on issues other than migration. In shorts and documentaries, numerous videos address the horrific travels across the Mediterranean "middle passage" and the loss of human lives at sea (e.g., Adil Tanani's *Il debito del mare* [2010]), the rights of political refugees and asylum seekers (e.g., Hugo Munoz's *Soloandata* [2008]), the life of migrants who work on Italian soil (e.g., Laura Halilovic's *Io, la mia famiglia Rom e Woody Allen* [2009] and Razi Mohebi's *Sangue e pomodori* [2010]), and the ordeals faced by the children of migrants born in Italy, the so-called G2, to obtain citizenship but also retain their cultural traditions (e.g., Maria Rosa Jijon's *G2: Forte e Chiaro* [2006], Medhin Paolos's *Onde G2* [2008], and Masoud Zenoudi Rad's *Baz Baran* [2010]). Among documentary directors, the work of Dagmawi Yimer stands out. In *Come un uomo sulla terra* (2008, with Riccardo Segre and Riccardo Biadene), Yimer narrates his own story as a student from Addis Ababa who traversed the desert between Libya and Sudan to reach the Mediterranean shore from where he embarked for Rome. The documentary is also an exposé of the accords between Libya and Italy to contain migratory flows. After the success of *Come*

un uomo sulla terra, Dagmawi Yimer released *C.A.R.A. Italia*, a pun on "D.E.A.R. Italy" (2010), and *Soltanto il mare* (2010, with Fabrizio Barraco and Giulio Cederna). *C.A.R.A. Italia* is a documentary narrated through the voice of Hassan and Abubaker, two Somali boys from Mogadishu who, having reached Tripoli, travel to Italy, where they end up in Castelnuovo di Porto, a center of temporary permanence located outside Rome. *Soltanto il mare* was shot on the small island of Lampedusa on 2010, where the director arrived in July of 2006 after three days spent at sea. As we mentioned when discussing Crialese's *Terraferma*, it portrays the perspective that island villagers bring to the issue of clandestine migration. The last work by Yimer is *Benvenuti in Italia* (2012), a documentary he directed with four others migrants (Aluk Amiri, Hamed Dera, Hevi Dilara, and Zakaria Mohamed Ali) to record their respective lives in Venice, Milan, Portici, Naples, and Rome. With regard to music, we already discussed, in Chapter 4, the impressive work of the Orchestra di Piazza Vittorio, whose Creolized sounds brought together musicians from a variety of backgrounds.

Our discussion, however, will focus on literary works, as we explore the transition from the early testimonies of migrant writers to the panorama of recent literary contributions that enrich our understanding of Mediterranean crossings. After analyzing the already-mentioned testimonies of Bouchane (*Chiamatemi Alì*) and Methnani (*Immigrato*), we will discuss postcolonial and diasporic writers from Libya and the Horn of Africa, focusing on Ribka Sibhatu, Luciana Capretti, Gabriella Ghermandi, and Igiaba Scego, and conclude with a panorama of the refugee and exiled writers from the eastern Mediterranean regions of the Balkans.

From Moroccan and Tunisian Shores: The Testimonies of Mohamed Bouchane and Salah Methnani

Critics have often considered the testimonies of early migrant writers as little more than examples of unmediated realism—"a pathetic testimony of hardship and pain, a lyrical expression of feelings, an exotic tinge of nostalgia" (Portelli, "Fingertips" 474). On closer inspection, lived and fictional testimonies of Mediterranean migration are much more complex than is generally assumed. While *Chiamatemi Alì* invites Italian readers to empathize and identify by laying bare the pain of uprooting and reminding them of the prejudice, violence, and exclusion that they themselves experienced, *Immigrato's* rekindling of the memory of Italian emigration questions the boundaries between self and other—native and foreign—to affirm the dignity of the human being outside the juridical and legal orders of the nation-state.

Chiamatemi Alì was published into book form following the suggestion of Bouchane's Italian language teacher and with the assistance of Carla De Girolamo and Daniele Miccione, who served as book editors. Composed of nine separate chapters, it opens on Friday, March 24, 1989, and closes on Tuesday, May 15, 1990, when Mohamed announces that a publisher will

produce his diary. The diary records the events that have led Mohamed and his traveling companion, Taufik, to depart from their hometown of Salé to find work in Italy. Narrated in the historical present, a tense that invites the participatory identification of the reader, Mohamed recalls the emotional last hours spent at home, where his uncles, cousins, sisters, and mother assembled to bid him farewell: "The moment of goodbyes [. . .] for three times I enter and leave the room where all of my family has gathered; every time with tears in my eyes and every time holding them back to avoid showing I am moved" (Bouchane 7). He then describes the journey from Rabat to Italy, where they arrive on Monday, March 27. Mohamed and Taufik are in an unfamiliar territory and wonder if they should go to Milan, Naples, or Turin, cities they have only heard of from others. They settle on Milan, where they spend a couple of nights in a modest hostel. Mohamed, overwhelmed by emotions, cannot sleep: "I have no friends, I don't know the language, I have neither a job nor a place to sleep [. . .] Maybe I'm not 'strong enough' and should go back home" (ibid. 11). The following day, on the advice of some African street vendors he has met, Mohamed goes to a commercial center where migrants can purchase wares to resell on the streets for a profit. However, fear overwhelms him, and he starts crying, attracting the attention of other migrant vendors: "I do not cry for money but because I am afraid; afraid for the future, nostalgic for Morocco and for my family" (ibid. 12). Eventually, Mohamed purchases some lighters but cannot even sell one. In the evening, he is informed that he and Taufik will have to leave the hostel since they cannot exceed a three-day stay. Thus they leave for a shelter run by "fratel Ettore" (ibid. 15), where Mohamed realizes that Italian culture rejects his Islamic beliefs, since, along with other migrants, he is given food and a bed to stay only on the condition that he participate in Catholic religious ceremonies.

Aside from the daily struggles to fulfill basic needs and the cultural compromises this entails, the entries that record Mohamed's days in Italy voice the difficulties of migrant laborers. After the failed attempt at selling lighters, for example, Mohamed starts distributing flyers with a new friend, Allal, traveling throughout Milan but also to Como for a meager salary that is tied to the number of flyers delivered. Following the example of Allal, Mohammed pretends to deliver large quantities of flyers to be compensated enough to survive but throws most of them in the sewers, thus violating the *ethos* of his Muslim upbringing: "I felt very guilty because my religion prohibits earning money dishonestly" (ibid. 29). In the months that follow, Mohamed continues to distribute flyers because he cannot find other jobs, until, on Saturday, June 24, he declares that he will become a window washer, performing an unsolicited service for Italian drivers in the hope of earning some more money. While this work humiliates Mohamed—"It seems to me that I have lost my dignity" (ibid. 49)—the money he receives encourages him to endure. But after being abused by a disgruntled customer, he finds new occupations, working first as a delivery boy for some masons and then as a handyman to remove walls and tiles from old apartments. In both jobs, he

is often cheated out of his pay and abused by his employers: "'Beast!' The word is Beast. Angelo calls me this for many days: 'Beast, go there,' 'Beast, be good,' 'Beast, do this,' 'Beast, do that'" (ibid. 108). The exploitation he suffers and the verbal abuse he endures lead him back to the streets as a seller of cigarettes (ibid. 123–126), where, besides struggling to earn a living, he faces the harassment and the physical abuse of the Italian police, particularly after his tourist visa expires, which leaves him illegally present on Italian soil: "The policemen [. . .] do not limit themselves to giving this person the order to depart but sequester all the money the person has" (ibid. 53). Elsewhere he recounts a beating dealt to him by the Italian police: "They open the door and they start beating us frantically, without saying a word" (ibid. 35). These examples of daily struggles are frequently punctuated by nostalgia triggered by religious festivities and by other painful moments worsened by separation and distance, such as the passing of Mohamed's grandmother (ibid. 103).

The diary also reveals a central aspect of the migrant's condition: the deculturation of the individual that Mohamed experiences in the behavior of friends who, contravening the Islamic banning of alcohol, drink to forget their present circumstances. Even Mohamed eventually succumbs to the narcotic effect that alcohol provides: "In a short time we finish the entire bottle [. . .] in our situation alcohol can help us forget our bad times" (ibid. 137). Deculturation, however, does not bring with it integration into the culture of the destination country. Mohamed's association with Italians is limited, being primarily confined to relationships established at work or with a group of volunteer teachers who offer free Italian language classes. The entries that record Mohamed's conversations with Italians reveal how the inhabitants of the Mediterranean's southern shores, despite their proximity to the North, are broadly reified in general terms: "He said: 'I rented a house to a black Moroccan from Senegal.' I [. . .] asked him why, for him, as for most Italians, foreigners are always Moroccans even if they come from Algeria, Senegal, Tunisia and Pakistan. I told him that if there truly are Moroccans from Pakistan and Algeria, then who am I? A Moroccan of Morocco? Or better yet, a white Moroccan of Morocco?" (ibid. 98). It is not only his employers but also his teachers who fall prey to Orientalizing assumptions: "When I tell them that [Morocco] is a country fourteen kilometers away from Spain they do not believe me. And they do not believe me when I say that there are no camels stopped at the light: I have only seen two my entire life. The first time it was in a park in Marrakesh; the second time in Agadir, where a camel was kept there for the tourists who wanted to take an exotic photograph" (ibid. 78). These stereotypes are coupled with the unwillingness of Italian speakers to call migrants by their given names. Taufik, for example, is renamed Vito (ibid. 155), and to avoid the same fate, Mohamed changes his name to another Arabic name that is easier to pronounce for Italians but is still "his" since it belongs to his native tongue: "I strike back. 'If truly you are not able to call me Mohamed,' I say, 'then call me Alì.' I choose Alì because it is simple and, like Mohamed, a

name that is liked and popular in Morocco" (ibid. 155). The host culture's inability or unwillingness to learn from or about immigrants is even more surprising when read in the context of Mohamed's own observations of Italians whose physical characteristics and demeanors are remarkably similar to those of North Africans: "Laura, one of our teachers, arrives with Gaspare, her boyfriend [. . .] Gaspare has the face of an Arab: he has dark hair, a dark complexion and a dark moustache" (ibid. 117). In another passage, Mohamed further stresses the visible signs of a shared Mediterraneanness: "Franco, Domenico's father, reminds me of Berber men, not only for his physique, but his mannerisms and the way he talks" (ibid. 166).

    At the end of 1989, Mohamed's life changes when the Italian government announces that illegal migrants will be eligible for a stay permit (ibid. 122). Mohamed also becomes eligible for a work permit, and after securing a job in a factory, he decides to find a more permanent living arrangement than the shelters where he has been sleeping. He discovers, however, that real estate agencies do not want to rent to migrants. He finds a place only when his teachers agree to be the leaseholders, eventually being offered an apartment that is in very poor conditions (ibid.144). Mohamed decides to make the best of it, and when Carla, one of his teachers, asks him if he wants to go back to Morocco, he replies by referring to the crossing of the Mediterranean by Tariq Ben Zayad at the Strait of Gibraltar in 711 CE: "I thought about it many times, but I always felt like Tariq Ben Zayad, the Arab leader who conquered Spain. After having burnt his fleet, he told his men: 'Beyond us is the sea, in front of us the enemies. What do you want to do?' I, too, have burnt my fleet and now I must proceed at all cost" (ibid. 171–172). More important, Mohamed turns this historical reference into an opportunity to bridge a cross-cultural gap with Carla: "Tariq is the same leader who gave Gibraltar its name, but Carla does not know it. I explain to her that in Arabic the word Gibraltar, Djebel Tariq, means precisely mountain of Tariq" (ibid.). The cross-cultural intent illustrated in this passage[27] is also at play in the diary as a whole. Revealing the performative goal of dialoguing with an Italian readership, the title *Call me Alì* implies an interlocutor, so many of the diary's entries mediate between cultures, informing readers of the religious and cultural practices of Muslims through citations of the *surahs* of the Quran;[28] descriptions of daily prayers; washing rituals; dietary restrictions concerning the consumption of *haram* as opposed to *halal* meat (ibid. 79); and religious festivities, such as *Id el-Kabir*, the Islamic holiday that commemorates Abraham's sacrifice of his son (ibid. 53), or *el-Esagher*, the last day of Ramadan (ibid. 31). And although Mohamed presents himself as a "Fakih, a word that in Arabic dialect means a very religious man" (ibid. 62), his diary does not shy away from mundane references to popular Arabic culture, including *rai* music, in a gesture that further testifies the author's intent to forge a dialogic relationship between his world and that of his Italian readership and to build on the empathy that his life story has elicited by laying bare the many emotions associated with the shared experience of Mediterranean migration.

Conversely, Methnani's *Immigrato*, written in collaboration with Fortunato, originated from an inquiry on the lives of migrants commissioned to the authors by the weekly magazine *L'Espresso* following the murder of Masslo at Villa Literno.[29] In response, Methnani opted to conflate his own experience with that of others immigrants, authoring a fictional testimony in which multiple accounts of migration flow into a first-person voice.[30] While this first-person voice traces many of the emotions described by Bouchane's *Chiamatemi Alì*, it also overtly invokes the history of Italian emigration to question the juridical order of the nation-state as qualifier of life. In doing so, it provides a powerful assertion of the "humanism of the other"—the sacredness of "the human independent of culture and history" (Lévinas 38).

After briefly describing Salah's life in Tunisia in the past tense, Methnani shifts to the present tense of testimonial narration to tell of his arrival in Sicily. There he discovers that his degree does not grant access to legal work and, therefore, to the contract he needs to obtain a work permit. Now "a North African immigrant, without work, without home, undocumented" (Methnani, *Immigrato* 26) in a country that defines humanity in legalistic political terms—European, native, legal citizen of Italy—Salah realizes that to Italian eyes he is a *non habet personam*, a person only in the biological sense. Excluded from "the cities of men" (Agamben, *Homo* 7), Salah becomes for Italy a living body, struggling to ensure biological survival as do countless other migrants from southern and eastern Mediterranean shores. Constantly in search of food and shelter, he journeys northward from the Sicilian city of Mazara del Vallo to Milan. This journey, narrated in chapters that bear the names of cities where migrant people traditionally settle ("Palermo," "Naples," "Rome," "Florence," "Padua," "Turin," and "Milan"), documents the pain, exclusion and abuse that Salah endures, thus reversing the myth of Italy as the migrant's paradise. The record of Salah's travels ends in Milan, where, after having experienced drugs, violence, and prostitution, he finds shelter in the "Cascina Rosa" (Methnani, *Immigrato* 130), a building condemned by Italian municipal authorities and now occupied by undocumented migrants. The book closes with the recollection of Salah's return to Tunisia for three weeks in the chapter "In Kairouan." This return is not described as a journey of recovery, or a *nòstos*, but as one of discovery—the discovery that the experience of migration has impacted his subjectivity to the point that he now feels as much a foreigner as a native (ibid. 126). Yet Salah embraces this new hybrid identity, and he concludes by announcing his new beginnings as a writer: "The bus took the main road to El Fahs and Tunis. I searched for the yellow notebook in my suitcase, under the seat in front of me. I wrote a few words. There was only one page, then no more white sheets left. On the page, diagonally, I wrote in Italian the word 'ciao.' I thought the journey was just beginning" (ibid. 130). Only in these final pages, a casual reference informs us that a new law has enabled undocumented migrants to become legal residents of Italy and acquire an extended stay permit (ibid. 125). Salah, however, does not provide information about how he escaped the streets—nor about how and when he received this permit. Such overt omission of the

juridical context surrounding his migration, unspoken within the context of the impact that migration has had on Salah's selfhood and identity, merits further consideration.

Published in 1990, *Immigrato* is written against a political background that led Italian lawmakers to regularize immigration in 1986 by granting legal status to clandestine immigrants who had entered the country prior to 1984. In 1990, this was followed by the Martelli Law. Although the final version of this law, vigorously opposed by the Right, was not as liberal as when originally proposed, it represented a significant improvement over existing legislation: it allowed entry for family reunification; introduced the rights of asylum and self-employment; and granted periodic amnesties while facilitating the issuance of stay permits. Yet Salah is silent over this legislative debate, removing his testimony from the Italian juridical context in which it occurs, acknowledging it briefly in the passage we last quoted, and even voicing his indifference toward it (ibid. 121). The lack of engagement over this major debate is unusual, particularly when compared to the testimony of Pap Khouma, another first-generation migrant writer who authored the autobiographical *Io, venditore di elefanti*. There, Khouma expresses his happiness at the news that the Italian government will enact the *sanatoria* and shows relief that the law might recognize his humanity: "Italian law has recognized our existence. We are no longer shadows, ghosts or illegal aliens. *We are men*" (*I Was* 123, emphasis added). Yet, by trusting that the new legislation will guarantee migrants access to the fellowship of humanity, Khouma legitimizes the juridical order of the state and validates its premise that human life is politically qualified and that personhood is socially, culturally, and historically defined. By omitting instead any major reference to the Italian legislation, Methnani's book subverts juridical definitions of the human being sanctioned by the nation-state, forcing us to take notice of those lives that are ungoverned and unprotected by the destination country's rule of law.[31] The silence over Italian immigration legislation shows that this testimony's power resides in an ethical relation "'before' history and 'before' culture" (Lévinas 38), in an affirmation of humanity above and beyond the horizons of existing and emerging polities, such as the relatively liberal Martelli Law.

The book's first chapter, "In Tunis," proves this point. Defying crude stereotypes about immigrants (e.g., poor, destitute, and uneducated), Salah describes himself as a 27-year-old Tunisian from a solid middle-class background who holds university degrees in Russian and English. As he grapples with the reasons that led him to migrate, he explains that he based his decision not only on the idea of Italy as a land of freedom held by Tunisian youth during the last years of Habib Bourghiba's presidency but also on childhood memories relating to his father, who would teach him numbers one to ten in Italian (Methnani, *Immigrato* 10). These reasons, bound in personal, historical, and cultural circumstances, ultimately elude the full understanding of both the reader and Salah himself: "I asked myself: 'Am I leaving as a North African emigrant or as any young man who wants to know the world?' That day, I could not give an answer to myself" (ibid. 14).

What is certain in these early pages is that a multifaceted, complex human being replaces the image of the indistinguishable migrant, as he refuses to be just a physical body that must be controlled, incarcerated, and punished. While still in Sicily, Salah forcefully states, "I will not end up in jail, and I will never sell my body [. . .] I will be able to go on: I have a degree, I am young and I am not a criminal" (ibid. 27). As Salah embarks on his journey northward, he continues to strive to affirm his humanity. He plans visits to the Sistine Chapel, the Vatican museums, and the Roman Forum as well as Turin's Egyptian museum "to give myself dignity" (ibid. 102). Besides recording acts that consciously reclaim the "humanity of being" denied by juridical categories, these chapters also question the distinction between self and other—native and foreign body. In an early chapter ("In Mazara"), for example, Salah's voice foregrounds the existence of a premodern Italian history of contaminations and crossovers recorded in the area of the city known as the Kasbah, where the memory of the origins of Mazara, colonized by the Arabs in the ninth century, is revealed in its urban and anthropological landscape (ibid. 21). Likewise, in "In Palermo," a shabby apartment in the neighborhood of Vucciria is described as a Tunisian minaret, while the streets of Naples are said to be like a Middle Eastern "bazaar" (ibid. 40). As the testimony progresses, these casual evocations of a history of contaminations and hybridization constitutive of "Italianness" across the centuries deepens into the conversion, or reconversion, of the modern Italian self into the vulnerable other of *La storia*,[32] the emigrant of the Italian global migration who, from unification well into the post–World War II era, was a foreign body in modern definitions of Italian identity. In this sense, the meaning of Salah's meeting with Tonino Cusumano, the author of *Il ritorno infelice* (1976), should not be lost. In his book, Cusumano examined the post–World War II migration of Tunisians to the province of Trapani, though his work placed the arrival of Tunisians within a broader history of trans-Mediterranean migration, binding the people of Sicily with those of Tunisia. These migrations occurred both ways throughout the centuries but increased in the direction of Tunis at the end of the nineteenth century. The ever-increasing Sicilian presence became a concern for France, which led to the Treaty of Bardo in 1881 and the Convention of Marsa, establishing the French protectorate over Tunisia. Sicilian migration, however, continued, and by the first decade of the twentieth century, the French government began repatriating new arrivals. The numbers of Sicilians diminished only with Tunisia's proclamation of independence from France in 1956 and the nationalization of private property that forced Italians to return to their own country. Many would then leave again, often toward northern Italy and northern Europe, where industrialization increased the demand for unskilled workers. Cusumano's book thus illustrates that emigration and immigration between Tunisia and Sicily has not been unidirectional, even as Tunisians now replace Sicilians in the island's villages.

Other episodes similarly recover the historical other excluded from modern definitions of Italian identity. Methnani cites an old Sicilian boatman who

describes the pain of emigrating to the North as being comparable to that endured by North Africans in Italy. He also reports a conversation with Carmen, a Sicilian woman who laments the destitution of the *mezzogiorno* and sees its need for labor migration, and recounts a trip by train with a Calabrese family going to Rome to visit relatives who had migrated there after World War II. Collectively considered, these meetings and discussions point to what critics like Sayad suggest is the specular function of migration. Sayad argues that immigrants are, at their origins, emigrants: human beings with countries, cultures, histories, and memories—in short, just like those individuals we call natives. Thus emigration and immigration cannot be separated by a system of difference and opposition since they constantly complicate boundaries between self and other. Migrants, regardless of their legal or juridical status, are before all else vulnerable human beings—the same beings who were once one's emigrant Italian parents or relatives: "One's country's immigration is another country's emigration. The two are indissociable aspects of a single reality" (Sayad 1).

Chiamatemi Alì and *Immigrato* offer examples of the performative force of lived and fictionalized testimonies. *Chiamatemi Alì* invites participatory empathy by voicing the pain of uprooting (e.g., abandonment, anxiety, fear, guilt, nostalgia, and sorrow), the suffering inflicted by the host culture (e.g., abuse, anger, estrangement, exploitation, humiliation, injustice, and prejudice), and the courage, determination, and hope that are part of a shared experience of Mediterranean migration. *Immigrato*, instead, questions the boundaries between native self and immigrant other by engaging the memory of Italy's emigrant past to affirm the dignity of being human outside the legal frameworks of the nation-state. Together, the testimonies of migrant writers, often relegated at the margins of Italian culture as preliterary experiences or as soon-to-be-forgotten literary curiosities, enable us to improve our understanding of human rights culture so that it encompasses not just rationality—and the political and judicial processes that derive from it—but also the range of emotions needed to develop an authentic trans-Mediterranean (and global) *ethos*. By doing so, they also lend legitimacy to Barreto's observation that "in the horizon of a literary culture the task of the sensibilization of the modern era finds in telling stories one of its more adequate possibilities" (110).

Colonial and Postcolonial Encounters in the Mediterranean: From Eritrea to Libya, Ethiopia, and Somalia

In Italy's contemporary literary landscape, other writers tell of Mediterranean encounters that further challenge Italian identity formation and require that we face not only the migrant other of yesterday or today but also the atrocities suffered by those impacted by the Italian (and Western) colonial advance in Libya, Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Somalia. These writers also ask Italian readers to explore the repercussions of colonization in the postindependence

period, when totalitarian regimes forced civil wars, departures, diasporas, and return migrations. Indeed, it is not coincidental that "in a period of about five years—from the 1969 coup of the Free Officers led by Gaddafi in Libya and the revolutionary upheaval in Somalia to the overthrow of the Ethiopian monarchy in 1974—all the former Italian colonies passed through drastic changes that propelled the radicalized segments of the armed forces to power" (Calchi Novati 163) and caused the ongoing upheavals that are still with us today.

The memory of Eritrea—a region that, with the Bay of Assab's purchase by the Rubattino shipping company in 1869, became the first of many areas targeted by Italy's colonial advance—is central to Ribka Sibhatu's work.[33] Sibhatu was born in Asmara in 1962 and attended Italian schools until 1979, when the war between Eritrea and Ethiopia shut them down. In 1987, she moved to Italy, where she studied at the university La Sapienza of Rome, authoring *Aulò. Canto-poesia dall'Eritrea* (1998). Written in the first person in Italian and Tigrinya, a language with an extensive yet understudied literary tradition, it combines notes on the Italian colonial occupation from the perspective of her grandparents Zeneghebriél and Hiritì; descriptions of Eritrean customs, fairy tales, proverbs, religious beliefs, riddles, rituals, and even recipes; autobiographical accounts of Sibhatu's imprisonment and torture in the Haz-haz women's prison in Asmara; and transcriptions of oral African songs, such as the *aulò* (used to honor someone but also defend one's self from criticism) and the *melques* (funereal lamentations for dead animals and people). The text also includes illustrations (provided by Marco Petrella) and addresses of two Eritrean embassies in Italy, schools of Tigrinya and Italian language in Rome, and churches and restaurants for Eritrean migrants. The unique structure of this bilingual text, where Italian language is used on the recto while Hebrew-looking Tigrinya occupies the verso, indicates an authorial intention to maintain contact with Eritrea through Tigrinya and other aspects of Sibhatu's native heritage but also to inform Italian readers of the many historical ties that bind Italy to Eritrea and, therefore, to mediate between cultures in the new context of contemporary Mediterranean migration. These are ties that originate in colonialism, a period that Sibhatu recalls frequently. For example, they surface in the conversations of her grandfather Zeneghbriél and grandmother Hiritì. While Hiritì, educated by Italian missionaries, hired to be an interpreter, and "one of the first emancipated women to travel to Europe" (Sibhatu 14), initially perceived Italy as a symbol of modernity ("shoes," "cars," "the machine that flies like birds do," and "the miracle of electricity" [ibid. 16]), her opinion changed after the enactment of racial laws and the apartheid that prevented her from going to downtown Asmara. By contrast, Zeneghbriél's assessment of colonialism is negative from the start. Sibhatu also discusses the main events of Italian colonialism in Eritrea, from the occupation of the Bay of Assab and the conquest of Massawa all the way to the postcolonial period. In addition, she includes a bibliography of historians of Italian colonialism, among whom are some well-noted scholars (e.g., Angelo Del Boca, Nicola Labanca, and Irma Taddei). This history, however,

extends far beyond the colonial period, since, as Zeneghbriél tells Hiritì, "the book of prophecies tells of the arrival on our lands of the people of the West and of their return where they came from. But the people from these lands will follow them and there will be apocalyptic signs!" (ibid. 18). In this fore-shadowing of late twentieth-century migratory flows also lies Ribka's own story and writing. This is a testimony of past ties between Italy and Eritrea—a record of her present condition as an Eritrean migrant—but also a conscious act of resistance to assimilation in the destination culture that is revealed in her choice of bilingualism, since her life story and cultural heritage are not translated into Italian but told in Tigrinya *as well as* in Italian. By doing so, Sibhatu's *Aulò. Canto-poesia dall'Eritrea* is a graphical embodiment of a negotiation between cultures in the context of present-day multiculturalism foreshadowed by Zeneghbriél's allusion to "apocalyptic signs." These are signs whose integrity resists deculturation and acculturation in the dominant, hegemonic discourse but also establishes a dialogic relationship through the side-by-side inclusion of Italian and Tigrinya.

Luciana Capretti, who narrates the impact of colonialism and its aftermath on native populations, including Jewish minorities and descendants of Italian settler-colonists, forcefully revives the repressed memories of Italy's colonial occupation of Libya.[34] In *Ghibli* (2004), Capretti, who was born into a settler family in Tripoli, whence she departed in 1961, recounts the multiple cross-ings of the Mediterranean by Italians: as conquerors and emigrant colonists first; and, after Gaddafi's coup and the deposition of King Idrisi al-Sanusi, as return migrants on a forced exodus, or *jalaa*. In her narrative of trans-Mediterranean encounters (reconstructed from family history, oral testimo-nies, and newspaper articles), Capretti's text translates the ebb and flow of this storied sea through the theme of the "ghibli," the hurricane-strength wind (variously known as *sirocco*, *xaroco*, *leveche*, *jugo*, *calima*, and *shlūq*, depending on one's location on Mediterranean shores), and in the structural organization of the novel's chapters, whose chronology moves forward and backward, from August 1970 to April 1970, September 1969, May 1970, June 1970, July 1970, and back to August 1970.

The novel dwells on the changed dynamics between settlers and natives following the *jalaa*. These dynamics are captured in singing on the streets of Tripoli after Gaddafi's coup ("Revolution, revolution; it is the time for you to work and for me to sit down and watch" [Capretti 137]) but also in memories of a photographic display and through the actions of a man named Mahmud. The display, staged by Gaddafi's Revolutionary Committee in the Tripoli Trade Fair, a fascist hall opened in 1927 to showcase Italy's accom-plishments in Africa, forced departing Italians to walk past images of colonial horrors before leaving Libya: "Marsa Brega, Soluch, Sidi Ahmed el Magrun, El Agedabia, El Abiar, El Agheila. Unforgettable names for Libyans. Names cancelled by fascist propaganda. Names to be explained to the people at the Fair" (ibid. 164). In Mahmud, Capretti describes a man overwhelmed by revenge and greed. Having served the Italians for years, Mahmud wants to own the jewelry store of Santo Attardi as well as the contents of its safe but,

to his dismay, finds only some hand tools and a note that says that everything was taken. The note alludes to the property that was confiscated from twenty thousand Italians by Gaddafi in 1970, an expropriation that returned land to Libyans while depriving settlers of "hundreds of small businesses and properties (houses, stores, artisanal workshops, small industries) that represented the modest fruits of a life of work" (Del Boca, "Obligations" 199).

Capretti, however, evokes examples of positive relationships between settler-colonists and natives that endured even during the *jalaa*. Among them are one between the Italian Peluso and the Libyan Ahmad, jailed by border police for protecting him (Capretti 166–167), and one between Cason and his native peasant worker. She also devotes important pages to the return journey across the Mediterranean by Italo-Libyans, who came "back by sea, as they had left" (ibid. 34). Among them are Davide Terracina and Santo Attardi. In a striking parallel to contemporary crossings of the Mediterranean, Terracina hides in the hold of a boat inside a cello case to reach Malta and Lampedusa, risking suffocation and emerging soiled in his excrements. Santo Attardi travels instead in a makeshift vessel before being rescued by Sicilian fishermen. The fate that awaits these return migrants is not a good one, since they have no place to go. As Capretti comments in an interview, "when they came back to Italy, they were housed in a center in Naples; they were promised a job [. . .] many of them had nothing [. . .] They seemed to be locked away in one of those centers like we have today" (Comberiati, *La quarta sponda* 29). Besides being confined to the centers, return-migrants were often labeled as former fascists, though in reality many were destitute Italians who had left the country hoping to rebuild a life on the other shore of the Mediterranean. This is the case of the Masino, one of the many poor recruited during the fascist colonial advance who settled in Libya to work a modest plot of land: "And with the new plow and the assigned mule [. . .] they began to work. For twenty years. To survive" (ibid. 115). The balanced assessment of the many victims of colonialism and postcolonialism that characterizes this novel is perhaps best illustrated in its opening verses: "Beyond ideas of right and wrong, lies a meadow. We will meet there" (ibid. 7). Written by Jalal ad-Din ar Rumi, the famed thirteenth-century Sufi poet, these lines allude to the mystical vision of the *tawhid*, the longing to recover a lost union that, in the context of Capretti's narrative, also suggests a will to transcend the horrors that national, ethnic, and cultural boundaries inflicted on the population of these Mediterranean shores.

The colonial and postcolonial memory of Ethiopia is central to the work of Gabriella Ghermandi, who was born in Addis Ababa from an Italian father and Italo-Eritrean mother and migrated to Bologna in 1979 following her father's death and the loss of the family's assets.[35] Her first novel, *Regina di fiori e di perle (2007)*,[36] is based on the carefully researched testimonies of men and women who experienced the fascist empire first hand. Broadly structured like a historical fiction, it employs the techniques of oral storytelling to narrate the stories of those who suffered the violence of Mussolini's regime. The novel opens in Debre Zeit, a town about fifty kilometers from

Addis Ababa. The elder of the house, Abba Yacob, makes the girl Mahlet promise that she will one day become the *azmari* of the community (Ghermandi, *Regina* 18)—a storyteller and repository of oral traditions similar to the *griot* in Western African tradition—and cross the waters of the Mediterranean to tell the story of the Ethiopians to Italians: "Collect as many stories as you can. One day you will be our voice. You will traverse the sea that Peter and Paul traversed and you will bring our stories to the land of the Italians. You will be the voice of our history that does not want to be forgotten" (ibid. 6). The novel then narrates Mahlet's upbringing and how she collects oral stories—the "flowers and the pearls" of the title. These stories encompass a vast historical period that begins on October 3, 1935, when Italian imperial forces invaded Ethiopia, one of the few countries that had escaped European colonization. Despite the condemnation of the Italian assault on a sovereign state by the League of Nations, of which Ethiopia was a member, the advance continued until May 1936, when the Italian troops reached Addis Ababa, forcing Negus Hailè Selassié to flee. That same year, Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Somalia were united as the colony of *Africa Orientale Italiana* (Eastern Italian Africa), and it was only in 1941, after the defeat of Italy by allied forces, that Britain regained control of East Africa and Hailè Selassié returned to the throne. In 1952, Ethiopia federated Eritrea, and ten years later, it annexed it to the Ethiopian Empire, only granting it independence in 1991, after a long war.

This complex and vast historical fresco comes to life in the oral, first-person narratives of many people, including Abba Yacob, Abba Cereka, Abbaba Igirsà Salò, Dinke, and the lady of the turtle. Abba Yacob, for example, narrates the arrival of Italian tanks and airplanes and the strong counteroffensive that ensued. The counteroffensive brought together the army of Hailè Selassié with that of the resistance led by the *Arbegnà*, male and female warriors who, as Cristina Lombardi-Diop has noted in the novel's postface, bear many similarities to the southern Italian brigands who fought against the army of the Italian state after 1861 (cited in ibid. 262). Following the battle of Tekezza in 1935 won by the Ethiopian leader Ras Imiru, the Italian forces responded by increasing their attacks on the northern front, leading to the famous battle of Amba Alagi. As the witness Dinke recalls, in Amba Alagi "8,000 people were burned to death [. . .] the smell of burned flesh [. . .] had penetrated everywhere [. . .] This is how the *talian* took the country" (ibid. 163). But the Italians also used other weapons against the Ethiopian resistance. After the defeat at Demberguina, General Badoglio ordered the use of poisonous gas, in contravention of the Geneva Convention of 1925. Abba Yacob recalls the suffering of the Ethiopians and the death of his parents, who "died together, in the North, two days before the *Timket*, killed by the gas" (ibid. 29), as does Abbaba Igirsà Salò (ibid. 144). These military operations opened the door to Addis Ababa, site of the horrifying massacre recounted by another voice in Ghermandi's choral novel, the lady of the turtle. One of the many episodes willfully archived by modern Italian culture, the butchering of civilians on *Yekatit* 12 (the Ethiopian

date for February 19), originated in the attempt by two boys to assassinate General Graziani, the Italian viceroy, at a public ceremony celebrating the birth of Victor Emmanuel, son of Italy's king. In a state-sanctioned reprisal that lasted two days, up to thirty thousand men, women, and children were killed; houses and Copt churches were burned; and thousands were rounded up and deported to concentration camps: "Addis Ababa was an inferno [. . .] with excruciating screams of women, men, children, like animals for slaughter [. . .] Two days after the beginning of the inferno, vultures had appeared and falcons had multiplied in the sky. During the night the spectral screams of hyenas mixed with the growls of stray dogs fighting for pieces of the cadavers [. . .] Cadavers of men, women, children and elderly [. . .] genital mutilations and the organs scattered on the ground" (ibid. 183–184). The references in these testimonies to killings on the eve of *Timket* (a Christian celebration to commemorate the christening of Jesus) or the burning of Copt churches on *Yekatit* 12 are reminders of the callousness of the fascist state and foreground the moral ambiguity of Italian Catholic identity during fascist colonialism, at a time when Pope Pius XI was cozying up to Mussolini after having signed the Lateran Pacts (1929), which gave him sovereignty over the Vatican and promoted Catholicism to religion of state. The novel often reminds us—in names such as Abba Yacob, references to the Madonna and Peter and Paul, and frequent descriptions of Christian celebrations and liturgical rites—that Ethiopia was then (as it is now) one of the oldest Christian nations, having converted to Orthodox Christianity as far back as the fourth century CE. Yet neither Ethiopia's long Christian tradition nor the official recognition of Italy as a Catholic nation after the Lateran Pacts of 1929 spared the country from the immoral objectification of its people in light of colonial ambitions.

Racism also plays a role in Ghermandi's fictional recording of witnesses' stories. These voices bear witness to the role that the Fascist Racial Laws of the late 1930s had in further perpetrating horrific acts against natives and Italians alike. Until the early 1930s, Fascism had stressed a Mediterranean race based on Rome's assimilation of different ethnicities in opposition to both German Aryanism and British imperial racism,[37] but the proclamation of the Italian empire in 1936 led to a fundamental change. The idea of an Aryan-Mediterranean race emerged, in which Italians embodied the Mediterranean branch of the Aryan type, causing a regime of apartheid to be enforced in the colonies. Not only were spaces in movie theatres, shops, and public transportation segregated, but unions between Italian men and indigenous women, tolerated until then, even if regulated by laws of *madamismo* ("concubinage"), were prohibited.[38] Abba Yacob narrates how his younger sister Amarech had become pregnant by an Italian soldier named Daniel and planned to settle in Wohà Petros to work the land. The couple's dream was shattered on April 19, 1937. The Fascist Law Decree 880 of 1937 delegitimated biracial children, criminalized mixed-race unions, and punished violators with up to five years in prison. To escape the Racial Laws, the couple joined the Ethiopian resistance, and like other Italians, including "one from

Southern Italy, who considered himself not very Italian, who used to say the Italians had colonized them as well" (ibid. 20), Daniel fought on the Ethiopian side, teaching resistance fighters about the weapons used by the fascists and explaining how their platoons were organized. However, shortly after the birth of their child, Daniel and Amarech were ambushed, arrested, and executed by fascist militia. Amarech had previously expressed the wish that Abba Yacob raise their interracial child, a baby girl named Rosa. Yacob abandoned the Resistance, and in his care, Rosa, a thinly veiled portrait of Gabriella Ghermandi's mother,[39] escaped the fate of the majority of mixed-race offspring (over ten thousand of them were born in Ethiopia between 1936 and 1941) who, unrecognized by the Italian government and subject to the prejudice of Italians and Africans alike, were placed in convents under the care of nuns.

Stories like the ones in Ghermandi's novel require that Italians acknowledge the horrifying cost of imperialism and racism on human lives. In the post–World War II years, those who committed crimes such as the civilian massacre of Addis Ababa or used mustard gas and arsine in chemical warfare against a harmless population were briefly imprisoned or simply acquitted. Although the Racial Laws were abolished with the Paris Peace Treaty of 1947, Italo-Africans were not recognized as legitimate children of Italian fathers until 1975, and many, condemned to a life of stigmatization, committed suicide (Comberiati, *La quarta sponda* 96). These efforts at mystifying the horrors of colonization coalesced around the publication of the multivolume *L'Italia in Africa* between 1953 and 1963. Promoted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and managed by a committee of 20 members, of whom 15 had been governors or high officials in the colonies, this work presented Italian colonialism as more humane than that of other European powers, perpetrating the myth that continues to be accepted by the general public of Italians as benign colonizers.

Besides bearing witness to the horrors of the fascist colonizing efforts and racial policies, Ghermandi's novel also spans the troubled postcolonial period that saw the restoration to the throne of Selassié in 1941; Ethiopia's annexation of Eritrea; the advent of the *Derg*, a military junta headed by Menghistu Mariam Hailè in 1974; and the thirty-year war between Eritrea and Ethiopia that ended in 1991, ushering a mass migration from the Horn of Africa toward Italy and other European nations. Ghermandi's protagonist, Mahlet, who was born under the rule of the *Derg*, recalls the confiscation of her family's home in Addis Ababa, the militarization of the country financed by the Soviet Union, the patrols led by terrorizing bands of young soldiers armed with Kalashnikovs, and the evolution of political unrest into a civil war that forced thousands to leave the country in what became known as the first Ethiopian diaspora (Ghermandi, *Regina* 91–92). By the late 1980s, opposition to the regime had mounted, until a coalition uniting the Eritrean People Liberation Front and fighters from the Tigrinya, Amhara, and Oromo ethnic groups took over the capital Addis Ababa in 1991, as Menghistu fled Ethiopia and Eritrea finally gained independence after decades of wars. Menghistu's

departure did not bring peace. In a description that matches that of the fascist colonial advance, Mahlet narrates how horrors and abuses returned to Addis Ababa, but victims and perpetrators were now fratricidal Africans (ibid. 103). The liberation of Addis Ababa plunged the city in chaos as those who lost property under Menghistu sought to regain it while fighters who had opposed him could not adapt to a life of peace: "They had been accustomed to violence, to extreme sensations, to actions dictated by the instinct of survival. It would take a long time for the poisons of war to leave our fighters' bodies freeing them to return to us" (ibid. 110).

Passages such as these broaden the ethical call of the novel, demanding a response to the Ethiopian civil war, the Eritrean war of independence, and the diaspora from the Horn of Africa that followed years of violence and abuse. The last story of the novel, "La storia di Woizero Bekelech e del signor Antonio," well captures this aspect of the text. Bekelech recounts how, despite the repeated warnings of her family, she left Addis Ababa for Italy to work, as many African migrant women do, as a domestic caretaker. One day, she meets Antonio, a neighbor who, as a young man, had enlisted in the fascist militia in the hope of working in Ethiopia as a translator of Amharic. Impressed by Antonio's fluency in oral and written Amharic, the illiterate Bekelech asks him to write letters to her family in Ethiopia. Antonio listens to the stories of abuse that Bekelech endured and restores her pride in her own heritage, reminding her that Ethiopians come from the same land as the Queen of Saba; that they are the descendants of King Solomon; and that their language is beautiful and rich in metaphors, with words that fill the mouth with poetry. As Bekelech draws closer to Antonio, she invites him to travel home with her, but he declines the invitation, revealing that the shame of Italian colonization will forever prevent him from returning to Ethiopia: "I will not come because I would not be able to look anyone in the face. In all these years, I reflected over many things and events that happened while I was there and I began to feel a great shame. Bekelech: I am ashamed, ashamed of what my country has done to yours" (ibid. 231). In this symbolic admission of guilt and especially in the reconciliation between the colonizer and the colonized, the novel allows for an order of sociality founded upon the bonding of emigrants and immigrants and of colonizers and colonized across Mediterranean shores and in the space of a shared historical experience. This is why Mahlet states, in a direct address to the Italian readership in concluding her choral narrative, "Today I am telling you his [Abba Yacob's] story that is *my* story but also *your* story" (ibid. 251, emphasis added).

The work of Igiaba Scego allows us to explore another colonial and diasporic experience across the Mediterranean—that of Somalia.[40] Author of short stories as well as longer novels,[41] Scego was born in Rome in 1979 of black Somali parents who left Somalia after the 1969 coup. Throughout her work, she narrates how identity is formed following a global dispersion and explores the development of subjectivities that straddle multiple cultures and traditions through comedic and ironic registers that are rare in Italian migrant and postcolonial writings. *Rhoda* (2004) focuses on the

communities of Somalis who have resettled in Rome and addresses the experience of migration from the perspective of four women—Barni, Faduma, and Barni's nieces, Rhoda and Aisha—who have migrated to Italy at different times and live their experiences differently. The character who gives the novel its title, Rhoda, struggles to integrate in the host society, and her body reveals the degradation of a self that loses its sense of identity following emigration. After a failed love story with an Italian woman, Gianna, Rhoda becomes a prostitute, not out of necessity, but as a form of self-punishment mixed with a desperate attempt to be accepted by Italians. She contracts HIV and returns to Mogadishu, where she does not die of the disease but falls victim to the civil war. Barni and Faduma, employed as domestic servants, experience migration as an entrapment filled with pain, suffering, and nostalgia. Yet, after accepting Rhoda's tragic ending, they decide to open an ethnic store in Rome (which they call "Rhoda") and embark on new beginnings. By contrast, Rhoda's sister, Aisha, embraces the multiple identities thrust upon her by the experience of emigration and welcomes the opportunity to interact with Italians. While the novel's *pathos* ranges from the tragic to the lyrical, Scego also uses irony, parody, and satire to address the Somali experience of the diaspora, affirm a plural identity, and tackle the legal and cultural fortifications of the host nation.

The stories "Dismatria" and "Salsicce," published in *Pecore nere* (2009), a collection of stories by nonwhite migrant and postcolonial female writers, illustrate this aspect of her work. (The title of the collection highlights the stories' transgressive nature, since in English, *pecore nere* ["black sheep"] alludes not just to skin color but also to the marginal yet participatory presence of some members of one's family or community.)[42] "Dismatria" describes the daily lives of a group of women who, much like *Rhoda*, respond differently to the experience of migration. Despite having lived for years in Italy, the older women, including the narrator's mother, refuse to settle down. They do not purchase armoires and instead keep all their clothing in suitcases, hoping to leave soon for Somalia:

> The word armoire was taboo [. . .] Mother was always saying: "If we keep all of our things in suitcases, later we will not need to pack them in haste." The "later" referred to some undefined time in the future when we would return to the bosom of mother Africa [. . .] Our nightmare was called *dismatria*. Someone, at times, would correct us and say: "In Italian you say 'expatriate,' therefore you are 'expatriates.'" We would shake our heads, sneer bitterly and reassert the *dismatria* we had just uttered. We were *dismatriate*, someone had cut the umbilical cord that tied us to our *matria*, Somalia, perhaps forever. (Scego, "Salsicce" 10–11)

One day, the narrator discovers that her mother's suitcase contains stereotypical icons of "Italianness": "a pack of spaghetti, photos of Rome's monuments, the hair of a cat, a slice of plastic parmesan-cheese, a kitschy souvenir of the she-wolf nursing the twins, a bit of dirt in a bag [. . .] and many

other strange things" (ibid. 21). Confronted about these objects, the mother replies, "I did not want to forget Rome" (ibid. 21), showing that she has embraced multiple affiliations that cross not just material boundaries and confines but also symbolic ones. The story concludes as the women empty their suitcases, revealing selves that can maintain ties to their Somali heritage while cultivating newly found Italian belongings, thus contributing to subvert exclusive ideas of "Italianness": "We looked at each other and smiled. We did not know it, but we had another *matria*" (ibid. 21).

"Salsicce" in many ways amplifies the concluding message of "Dismatria." It narrates the story of a Sunni Muslim girl from Somalia who now resides in Rome. Like most *extracomunitari* ("non-EU people") living under the Bossi-Fini legislation, she is subject to the rules regulating the renewal of her stay permit: "My anxiety began with the announcement of the Bossi-Fini Law: *All extra-communitarians who wish to renew their stay-permit must be fingerprinted* [. . .] Was I an extra-communitarian, thus a potential criminal, whose fingerprints the State would take to prevent a crime that, it was supposed, I would sooner or later commit?" (ibid. 26). She then goes to a butcher to purchase five kilos of pork sausages, a food prohibited by Islamic tradition, with the intent of eating them to erase her cultural difference. Indecision ensues as the narrator refuses the sameness that conforming to normative definitions of Italian identity promises. She decides to neither cook nor consume the sausages. Instead, she makes a list that negates, through humor, standard qualifications of national Italian identity and reveals how "Italianness" encompasses a multiplicity of nonexclusive affiliations to cultures, languages, and traditions:

> Let's see. I feel Somali when: (1) I drink tea with cardamom, cloves and cinnamon; (2) I pray five times a day towards Mecca; (3) I wear a *dirah*; (4) I scent the house with incense or *unsi* [. . .] (12) I weep for my country torn by civil war; (13) and 100 other things, how can I remember them all! And I feel Italian when: (1) I have sweets for breakfast; (2) I visit art shows, museums, and monuments; (3) I talk about sex, men, and depression with my women's friends; (4) I watch movies starring [Italian] actors [. . .] I speak with my hands [. . .] (12) I hum Mina's 'Un anno d'amore' in the shower; (13) and 100 more things, how can I remember them all! (ibid. 30).

The story ends with the narrator throwing the sausages in the garbage: "Would I be more Italian with a sausage in the stomach? Would I be less Somali? [. . .] No; I would be the same; the same mix. And if this is a bother, from now on, who cares" (ibid. 35).

La mia casa è dove sono (2010), is, arguably, Scego's best novel to date. It combines many of the concerns expressed in previous writings but does so in ways that tie Africa to Italy diegetically as well as through the structure of an autobiographical novel. The narrative begins with a narrator, identified as "Igiaba," the Italian-born daughter of the Somali Kadija and Alì Omar, who claims to have understood that Europe and Africa have much in common and

that Rome and Mogadishu are in fact twin cities (ibid. 17). This understanding, we learn, occurred in an English kitchen four years earlier, where the narrator had met with family members of the Somali diaspora—her mother, brother Abdulcadir, sister-in-law Nura, nephew Mohamed Deq, and cousin O., all citizens of different European countries ("English, Italian, Finnish" [ibid. 14])—to reminisce about the country where not all of them were born. Overtaken by *saudade* (ibid. 13), Portuguese for "nostalgia," the group draws a map of Mogadishu: "Our city emerged after the civil war, the monuments destroyed, the streets torn, the conscience sullied. We needed that drawing, that paper city to survive" (ibid. 21). From the memories of Abdulcadir and O. emerge the Maka al Mukarama, Mogadishu's main avenue, renamed after the departure of the fascists, and its many buildings: the movie theater Xamar, where Somalis could not enter; the school Guglielmo Marconi, renamed Yaasin Cusman after Barre's coup, where Italian teachers taught Abdulcadir and O. the poetry of Giovanni Pascoli; the Italian restaurants and bars; and many other sites, since "Italy was everywhere: it was in the names of the streets, on the faces of the rejected mixed-race" (ibid. 27). As they are drawing, Deq asks the narrator if this is her city. The question triggers, in the Italian-born Somali, much indecision: "What am I? Who am I? I am black and Italian. But I am also Somali and black. Am I Afro-Italian? Italo-African? Second generation? Uncertain generation? [. . .] I am a crossroad" (ibid. 31). So, following the advice of her mother, she decides to complete the map of her city. She buys Post-it notes, writes on them the names of six places and monuments in Rome, and attaches them to the map of Mogadishu (ibid. 35).

The remainder of the novel revolves around these sites, all tied to specific moments of her life and genealogy that enable her to narrate the crossings of African and Italian identities that constitute her. For example, the chapter "Teatro Sistina" focuses on a famed theater where many Italian stars performed and her father Omar visited between 1950 and 1960. Raised during the Italian trusteeship, Omar was sent to Rome to train in political administration, at which time he had visited the Teatro Sistina to see and hear Nat King Cole, and "became convinced that if he found himself in trouble, he would seek refuge in Rome" (ibid. 51).

The following chapters provide additional snapshots and deeper reflections on the lives of and identity issues negotiated by members of the narrator's family. Thus, in the second chapter, "Piazza Santa Maria sopra Minerva," Bernini's statue of an elephant carrying an ancient Egyptian obelisk embodies the servitude of the African exile and becomes the occasion to reconstruct the life of Kadija, the narrator's mother, who, traveling from the African savannah to Mogadishu and from there to Rome, endured many abuses (including genital mutilation, which she and her husband will oppose for her daughter) and struggled to adapt to her new urban environment. Similarly, "La stele di Axum" uses the obelisk stolen from Ethiopia in 1937 and erected in Porta Capena Square to celebrate the fifteenth anniversary of the fascist March on Rome[43] as an opportunity to tell the story of the narrator's grandfather Omar Scego and uncle Osmar Oman Scego. The former, who had learned Italian,

avoided conscription in the native fascist militia (the *askari*) during the Italian occupation, and become an interpreter that translated even for Graziani before serving as a minister in the first Somali government. The latter was instead assassinated shortly before Barre's coup, marking the beginning of the family's "decadence" (ibid. 87) and departure from Somalia.

Quite à propos, the following chapter, "Stazione Termini," revolves around Rome's main train station, where the many Somalian émigrés come together to exchange stories, find out news about family and friends dispersed worldwide, and purchase foods and objects from the Horn of Africa. The Termini Station also evokes a memorial service that commemorated migrants who died at sea in 2003: "A ship has shipwrecked; one of those that crossed the Mediterranean [. . .] Those who were boarding those boats were escaping wars, hunger, famine [. . .] That old cart of the sea was full of Somali[s] [. . .] dead off the coasts of Lampedusa" (ibid. 97). The narrator recalls that whereas in 2003 Italians shared in their grief, now "we send back the asylum seekers from the Horn of Africa in the clutches of Gaddafi, in his obscene lagers [. . .] Illegality [. . .] does not come from the sea and neither does criminality. From these boats came people who escaped wars and dictatorship. Criminal networks take other paths: airplane tickets and all comforts" (ibid. 98). Like "Stazione Termini," the "Trastevere" chapter relates the experience of cross-Mediterranean migration, but here it does so as it pertains to the struggles faced by her family when it arrived in Rome having lost everything in Somalia. The last chapter/site, "Stadio Olimpico," blends personal and Italian history, as the stadium was the site where Mussolini had planned to celebrate the imperial grandeur of the regime and where the 1960 Olympic Games took place, in which, ironically, one of the greatest stars was the barefoot Ethiopian marathoner Abebe Bichila, whose victory in the event many Africans celebrated as symbolic of the continent's freeing itself of colonial shackles. The stadium also elicits painful memories of abandonment for the protagonist, as it is where she reminisced when her mother was stuck in Mogadishu—where she had gone to prepare the family return—during the civil war. Being "colored," the authorities did not consider the mother an Italian citizen and did not help her repatriate. Although she would return safely after two years, these memories lead the narrator to thoughts about those left behind—especially the weak, the wounded, and the elderly who are now supported through remittances: "Love from here to there is quantified in money [. . .] We pay in cash our sense of guilt; our distance from the rumble of battles" (ibid. 131–132). The civil war years had another effect on the narrator, as they allowed her to come to terms with her own identity, from the racism hurled her way due to her skin color and Somali heritage[44] to the self-inflicted pain of bulimia and the loss of her mother tongue.

The book concludes with "Essere italiano per me" ("Being Italian for Me"), an epilogue that brings it to a positive resolution. Through her storytelling, Igiaba has acquired a new pride in herself, learning that behind the Somali diaspora are legacies, histories, and traditions (e.g., Egypt, Greece, India, Rome, Turkey, and the Kingdoms of Ashanti and Bambara [ibid.

156]). This pride in her past leads her to accept the crossroads that is hers as well as an "Italianness" that is not pure but rather hybrid and crisscrossed: "Italy is a Babel: everyone has passed through here: Arabs, Norman, French, Austrians. Hannibal arrived with his African elephants. 'This is why Italians have black skin,' sang Almamegretta [. . .] To be Italian means to be part of a fried mix. A mix made of crossings and contaminations" (157–158). This "Italianness" of multiple belonging encompasses not just Igiaba but also the readers of her tale: "I concentrated on the first twenty years of my life [. . .] because they prepared the Somali chaos [. . .] But they have also been twenty years in which Italy has changed as never before. From a country of emigrants to a country of immigrants [. . .] I am the fruit of these braided forms [. . .] and my map is the mirror of these years of change. It is not a coherent map. It is a center but also a periphery. It is Rome but also Mogadishu. It is Igiaba, but it is also *you*" (159–160, emphasis added).

From the Balkans

This chapter would not be complete without a brief mention of those writers who have crossed the eastern shores of the Mediterranean from the Balkan states of Albania, Bosnia Herzegovina, Croatia, and Serbia. Motivated by economic as well as political factors, they reflect the experiences of labor migrants but also asylum seekers and political refugees.

Albanians constitute a large migrant presence in Italy, where their history speaks to the tradition of ethnic and cultural mixings that contemporary Italians conveniently forget. As we showed in discussing the work of Carmine Abate in Chapter 6, migrations from Albania to Italy have been frequent through history, leading, as early as the fifteenth century, to the founding of *Arbëreshë* communities in Abruzzo, Apulia, Basilicata, Calabria, Molise, and Sicily. But Gianni Amelio's *Lamerica* reminds us that Italians have also moved less peacefully to Albania: in 1914, Italian soldiers entered Vlöre, and in 1917, areas of southern Albania were declared Italian protectorates. The treaties of Tirana of 1926 and 1927 further established Italian influence in the region, and in 1939, Italian warships landed on Albanian coasts as Mussolini deposed King Zog and claimed the crown for Italy's Victor Emmanuel III. The broader plan was to use Albania as a platform to invade Greece and Yugoslavia (with disastrous consequences for fascist Italy) and fulfill Fascism's ambition of a new *mare nostrum* through the control of the eastern Mediterranean waters. After World War II, Italy lost Albania and its colonial holdings, while Albania fell under the rule of Enver Hoxha, one of Europe's most repressive communist dictators.

With the fall of the Berlin Wall, like other Western countries, Italy supported the popular uprising against the communist regimes that succeeded Hoxha's death in 1985, and in July 1990, "Italy was among the first to organize refugees [. . .] who wanted to cross over into Europe, seeking asylum in the embassies of Western countries (800,000 in the Italian embassy alone)" (Dal Lago 196). The Albanians, historically seen as "bastion[s] of Christianity

against the Turks" (ibid.), were hailed as brothers and sisters to Italians and welcomed by the mayors of many municipalities. When, however, Albanians began crossing the Mediterranean on their own in 1991, perceptions rapidly changed. In official and media discourses, they became criminals threatening the nation, and on the background of the Gulf War, new suspicions were aroused: "Won't the Albanians be motivated to 'rediscover Islam?' [. . .] Wasn't Valona the port from which Mahomet II in 1480 launched his successful attack on Otranto?" (ibid. 197). This crisis was heightened by one of the most notorious episodes of trans-Mediterranean migration in recent history: the arrival and detention of more than 15,000 Albanian refugees in the stadium of Bari in 1991. In scenes reminiscent of the internment of Jews at the "Vélo d'Hiver" (1942) and of political prisoners in the stadium-turned-lager of Santiago, Chile, in 1974 (ibid. 200–201), the refugees, who had no bathroom facilities or running water, were doused with water hydrants as food was dropped on them from planes. Finally, after a near uprising that ruined the stadium, each person was given a new t-shirt and pants and the equivalent of $40 and was sent back to Albania. The crossings did not cease, as many Albanians, either as sanctioned refugees or as illegal immigrants, have continued to reach Italy, favored by the relatively short distance that separates Albanian from Italian shores. Many, who learned Italian by watching television programs broadcast from the peninsula, used their facility with the language to represent their struggles and tell their stories. Among them, Gëzim Hajdari and Ron Kubati stand out.[45]

Born in a hilly village in Darsìa, Albania, in 1957, Hajdari occupies a special place among Albanian writers. A schoolteacher before the death of Enver Hoxha, he helped cofound the Albanian Republican Party in his home region but fled the country in 1992 after an attempt on his life when he was a candidate for parliament. Given his public accusations against the instability and corruption that plagued even democratic Albania and that made him *persona non grata*, he established residency in Italy, working as a day laborer and field worker as well as a lecturer. In Italy, he furthered his studies, receiving a degree from the University of Rome. His poetic output is vast and spans Albanian and Italian languages. After writing his first two collections in his native tongue while still in Albania—Italian titles, *Antologia della pioggia* and *Erbamara*—each subsequent collection was written with side-by-side text in Albanian and Italian. Significantly, in his eighth collection, *Maldiluna* (2005), the Italian text, which traditionally had appeared on the rectos, first appears on the versos, indicating a conscious transition to Italian as his primary language. Among his most important works are *Sassi controvento* (1995); *Corpo presente* (1999), which contains the poems that garnered him the prestigious Premio Montale for Poetry in 1997; *Stigmate* (2004); and the long poem *Poema dell'esilio* (2005, second expanded edition 2007), a writing that defies classification, as it is "pamphlet, elegy, invective, lyrical exposé" (Ramberti 8). In addition to poetry, Hajdari has written two important travelogues, *San Pedro Cutud. Viaggio negli inferi del tropico* (2004), and *Muzungu, Diario in nero* (2006), in

which he denounces the regime of the quasi-dictator Museveni and celebrates the opposition of those who, there and elsewhere, fight oppression the world over.

Hajdari's poetic trajectory is clearly influenced by the experience of exile, which resurfaces in the contraposition between natural landscape elements from the past and the present (Italian) scenery as metaphors for the poet's internal experience of uprooting and for the historical and social events his poetry forcefully relives for the readers. Thus the rain does not hold regenerative powers but "cuts the days of my life / and floods my reasoning" (Hajdari, *Poesie* 56), while ironically allowing him to "celebrate my solitude in Ciociaria" (ibid. 59), the area not far from Rome where he has lived since settling in Italy. Similarly, Italian cities, symbols of a West to which Hajdari poorly adapts ("these cities / with walking dead inside them" [ibid. 58]), are "deserts beyond / other deserts" (ibid. 67) when compared to the hills and valleys of Darsìa, populated by the rhythms of a peasant world lost both metaphorically and geographically and by the songs of blackbirds and *peligòrgas* ("European bee eaters").[46] In this mental landscape, rocks are constantly invoked to express the frustration of messages thrown "against the wind" (see the poetry collection by the same title), as are the shades that haunt Hajdari's poetry as the embodiment of both those lost through political betrayal and those left behind, as is the case of his mother, who is a frequent, albeit silent, interlocutor in many poems.[47]

Hajdari's poetry is not only a lyrical reflection on interior dramas and emotions but frequently exposes the brutality of the migrant condition and stands as a *j'accuse* against politicians on both sides of the Mediterranean divide. Thus his "blind memory" runs "in the company of lifeless bodies" to "gather the voices of survivors" and give expression to "my South, / sad land without a mouth / sown with anonymous bodies / and the drowned dreams of black people" (ibid. 79). And his status as an "anonymous extra-communitarian / searching for another home / searching for another hole" (ibid. 109) in this "sterile Country" that will not listen (ibid. 120) turns him into a spokesperson for the suffering of thousands of others who, from the Souths of the world, fear to be left "without burial / in the West" (ibid. 165). Representative of this commitment to reporting with outspoken clarity abuses of power (e.g., offering names, citing events) are both the epic reach of *Poema dell'esilio*, which documents the failures of Sali Berisha's and subsequent Albanian governments to emancipate themselves from the endemic corruption rampant through the communist years, and *Muzungu*, which, as we already mentioned, does the same for the dictatorial regime currently ruling Uganda.

A final consideration merits Hajdari's perspective on language and identity as it pertains to the experience of the migrant. In a thoughtful essay, "La lingua del paese ospitante come nuova infanzia" (2006), Hajdari recalls how his ancestors taught him to interpret and read the world through his native language. Like Erri De Luca in our previous analysis, he explains that "our ancestors lived with the sky [. . .] Today we have lost the ability

to read the sky and understand the earth [. . .] My lifestyle enabled me to know plants, forests, animals, grasses, rivers [. . .] epic, magic, rites, sounds, noises" (Hajdari, "La lingua"). He thus owned an original, strong identity, which the migration to Italy dispersed. Arriving in Italy resulted in a *spaesamento* (literally, "decountrification")—a deculturation that led to an "identity crisis," because "for the first time you realize that your true identity is not tied to a territory, but to language, memory and culture; you are not migrating from one country to another, but from a language, memory and culture to another [. . .] You are an exile. Places no longer have meaning. You are always seeking something different, another place" (ibid.). This changes how one perceives identity outside of political or national boundaries: "Your identity in the nationalistic and patriotic sense means nothing. Now what counts is the geography of body and soul: your body becomes your country and your name your identity [. . .] Now you must learn the most basic words [. . .] The language of your host country becomes your new 'mother tongue'" (ibid.). The poet, and the migrant writer by transposition, discovers that "both languages exist in exile: Italian exiled in Albanian and Albanian exiled in Italian" (ibid.). This condition, while frightfully limiting at first, becomes a strength through time as the foreignness of both languages produces a return to a childish state, where one lives "on the edge of annihilation, in a cursed state, but also in the enchantment" that the two languages produce through their ability to create something new and magical yet different from anything experienced before (ibid.). In the commingling and cooperation between native and migrant linguistic registers, one produces an added value that serves also to open new avenues to expression and signification. This, we might say by extension, is the power that the many writers we have discussed hold: to see Italy and its language through the prism of migration and, in writing it thus, reconstitute its identity and its future in multicultural, pluralistic terms.

This kind of linguistic creativity is on display in the first novel by another Albanian writer, Ron Kubati.[48] *Va e non torna* (1999) was hailed on publication as a cornerstone of migrant literature for its stylistic and thematic boldness. Central to the novel are reflections on the questions of identity and self as they relate to the other, whether this other is defined by boundaries of gender, social class, or ethnicity. The protagonist, Eldon, is a young Albanian immigrant who, like many Italian temporary workers, struggles to balance his ambition to complete his university degree in literature with temporary jobs as a translator/interpreter for the Italian justice system and with his precarious and often ruinous relationships with women. Yet while the contemporary existence of the protagonist is balanced against the background of his youth spent growing up in Albania under Hoxha's regime (the narrator describes the events, during this time, that led to the incarceration of his father for ten years, his growing up as the son of a political prisoner, and, finally, the student revolts that led first to the fall of the regime and then to the protagonist's departure from Albania), the reader is seldom privy to his thoughts

about life as an immigrant in the Italian South. What is peculiarly amiss is the time between the departure from Albania and the present: the novel's diegesis ends the Albanian period with Eldon jumping onto a ship that will lead him to Italy, and it begins anew with Eldon meeting the assistant to the chief prosecutor to discuss files he translates for one of the cases pertaining to Albanians imprisoned for participating in organized crime activities in the Italian city where Eldon resides. Consciously or unconsciously, the narrator and the author omit precisely those thoughts and factual details that pertain to his arrival in Italy and what we must assume was a period of integration as an alien in a new country.

Kubati refrains from openly addressing these issues and indeed suggests that his protagonist's integration has been easier than others: he works for the municipal police and court system when he is not doubling up as a waiter for a pizzeria; he dates the Italian Elena, for whom his Albanian origins do not pose any problems; and, by the end of the novel, he has attained his university degree, a goal that remains a mirage even for some of his Italian coworkers, like the policeman Paolo. Having said this, migration plays a role in how the protagonist immerses himself in Italian society in general and, more subtly, in how he reflects on his sense of identity and belonging in this new world. For one, Eldon participates actively in the marches organized by immigrants and immigrant sympathizers in his adopted country. Not only does he march in the demonstrations; he often is among the speakers who take the stage to denounce the injustices they suffer at the hands of an Italian system that is bent on marginalizing them. This parallels his involvement in the Albanian student revolts, where his open instigation of the crowd had almost nefarious consequences, as he was picked up by members of the Sigurimi, Albania's secret services, and, only due to a miraculous coincidence, escaped punishment. Eldon also feels the weight of racial discrimination in his work as a waiter, since the owners have no problem parading him in front of progressive customers but assign all the menial jobs to him when these customers are out of sight, often adding a good number of racial insults to their commentary on his work. Surprisingly, Eldon is treated with respect and courtesy most often when he works with the courts and the police, though this might be explained by the fact that he is often helping them deal with the contraband and underworld activities of fellow Albanians, thus allowing for their capture, imprisonment, or deportation from Italy. (Eldon's realization that he might have become a pawn seems confirmed by his quitting these jobs by the end of the novel.)

More important, however, Eldon's status as a migrant is underscored in the title of the novel itself. His attitude toward life as the alien other in Italy seems to be governed by a recurring motif found in Balkan folktales. Heroes in these stories find themselves faced with three possible outcomes in the face of challenges: "go and come back easily, go and come back with difficulty, or go and do not come back" (Kubati, *Va e non torna* 186). The first two outcomes lead to a quick denouement and conclude the tale, suggesting that the heroes have been reabsorbed in their daily lives and transformed into

"anonymous actors." The third path, the folktales suggest, usually begins by reminding us that "the majority of those who have taken it end badly, very badly," as they face the challenges of dragons, evil kings, and so on. Although the hero prevails and "evil is defeated," Eldon points out that the story hides a bitter truth: "The impression is always the same, that good and life triumph. But the hero is such because, before him, ninety, one hundred, maybe a thousand others failed. For the tale this is an insignificant detail. [But] for young people, it is their duty to loosen their ties to the automation of their responses" (ibid.). Eldon's explanation, coming just before the narrator relates his last memories of Albania, when he and his fellow émigrés have boarded the ship that will take them "we do not know where," as "ahead of us there's nothing in sight" (ibid. 193), suggests both the indeterminacy of the plight that he and his fellow migrants face and the attitude of heroism implicit in their tackling of the unknown and its challenges in their new country. Although going back might bring quicker relief both to their sense of identity and to the challenges they face, it is this open-ended quest for their own life story that requires both their heroic endurance and their ability to adapt and find new meeting grounds with the natives they encounter. (Incidentally, this is what Eldon does throughout the novel.)

The early 1990s marked not only the arrival of large numbers of Albanians but also the start of the war in the ex-Yugoslavia that led to a diaspora whose members include a number of writers and intellectuals who settled in Italy and other Western European countries. Among them are the Bosnian Božidar Stanišić, Stevka Mitran, and Spale Miro Stevanović; and the Croat Vera Slaven, Sarah Zuhra Lukanić, and Vesna Stanić.[49] The upheaval of the Balkans traverses all these authors' works but is most vividly recounted by Stanišić. Born in Visoko (1956), Stanišić left for Zugliano (Friuli) at the start of the conflict. In *I buchi neri di Sarajevo e altri racconti* (1993), Stanišić recounts the violence that took place in Yugoslavia after the death of Tito in 1980. A region of ethnic and religious groups that, after World War I, coalesced into a nation of Bosnian-Herzegovinians, Croats, Macedonians, Serbs, and Slovenes, Yugoslavia was a socialist yet anti-Stalinist state, independent of the USSR. With the death of Tito and the decline of the Soviet communist regime, dormant ethnic nationalism awoke, and Slovenia, Croatia, Macedonia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina declared their independence. While the independence of Slovenia and Macedonia was peaceful, Croatia and Bosnia engaged in a bitter war. Bosnians and Croatians formed a majority against the Serbs, and, fearing a genocide, Serb extremists began attacks against civilians, with rape, especially of Bosnian women, being used as a weapon of war. As the conflict degenerated, concentration camps and mass killings became widespread on all sides. In narrating these events, Stanišić bears witness to the traumatic events and horrors occurring at the footsteps of Europe and also casts doubt on the ability of the region to forge models of peaceful coexistence. In this sense, Stanišić rejoins the reflections of another Balkan writer that we have cited at the beginning of our study, Predrag Matvejević, the author of *Breviario Mediterraneo* (1991), which was partially

translated as *Mediterranean: A Cultural Landscape* (1999). A native of Croatia, Matvejević left in 1991 for Paris. He then lived in Italy and taught at La Sapienza in Rome (1994–2009) before moving to Zagreb. His main works, most of them written in Croatian and French and subsequently translated into Italian,[50] cast doubt on Mediterranean cosmopolitanism, as when he describes the old bridge on the Neretva river of his hometown of Mostar, built in 1566 during the time of Soliman the Magnificent and a symbol of the encounter between "East and West" (Matvejević, *Mondo Ex* 172), which collapsed under the bombs of Serbs and Croats. Sarajevo, where Christians, Orthodox, and Muslims lived side by side, was placed under siege by the Serbian army for 1,425 days, the longest siege of the twentieth century. Many of the ten thousand civilian casualties had to be buried in the public garden, now transformed into a makeshift cemetery (ibid. 159). These painful memories lead Matvejević to conclude not only that Western, "civilized" Europe abdicated its moral and ethical responsibility (ibid. 131) toward what he now calls "the other Europe" (*Il Mediterraneo e l'Europa* 87–89) but also that the Balkan state, poised between different cultures, religions, and traditions, but also the competing ideologies of socialism and capitalism, is an "ex-world," perhaps only a dream—a fragile construction that failed as soon as the authoritarianism of Tito's government ended. Matvejević's most somber account thus joins that of the Mediterranean of migrant, postcolonial, and exile writers from all shores of the sea in revisiting the violent history of the region in past but also very recent times while imparting, alongside their voices, a sense of urgency for new models of Mediterranean belongings capable of crossing real and symbolic boundaries.

POSTFACE

On February 23, 2012, the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) in Strasbourg condemned the Italian government, in *Hirsi Jamaa and others v. Italy*, to pay 15,000 euros to each of the defendants who brought the case forward. The case, which drew worldwide indignation for the callous ways in which Italy disregarded international law and the statutes set by the same European Union, refers to events that took place between May 6 and May 7, 2009, near the island of Lampedusa. There, Italian coast guard cutters intercepted three boats carrying Eritrean and Somali citizens toward Italy and returned them to Libya, where they were detained, beaten, and deprived of even basic necessities. While theoretically operating under the rules set forth by the Schengen Border Code that allow member states to stop unauthorized border crossings and, following the agreement signed by Prime Minister Berlusconi with Libya's Muammar Gaddafi in 2008, to stop boats carrying migrants from Libya's shores toward Italy (in exchange for preferential treatment in business dealings, compensation for Italy's colonial occupation, and so on), this repatriation violated the international agreements of the Geneva Convention (of which Libya is not a signatory); the principle of *nonrefoulement* set forth by the ECHR, which states that "states must refrain from returning a person (directly or indirectly) to a place where he or she could face a real risk of being subjected to torture or inhuman or degrading treatment";[1] and Italy's own constitution (article 10), which legislates that "foreigners, who are not allowed in their own country to exercise the democratic ideals and freedoms granted by the Italian Constitution, have a right of asylum in the territory of the Republic according to rules established by law."[2] As documented by Andrea Segre and Stefano Liberti's poignant documentary, *Mare chiuso*, the direct and indirect consequences of this irresponsible action were that the refugees handed back to Libya were detained, punished, and tortured in Gaddafi's notorious jails (including women and children). Some finally escaped during the Libyan revolution to reach refugee camps in Tunisia, where they are still housed; others, having attempted once more to cross the Mediterranean, either barely survived (like Ermias Berhane, one of the protagonists of Segre and Liberti's documentary) or died at sea, as happened in March 2011, when a boat adrift off the coast of Libya sent an SOS to the Italian coast guard but was left to its own devices for days—with the exception of some cookies and water dispatched by a NATO helicopter—so

63 out of the 72 people in the boat died (eliciting, once more, the condemnation of the European Council). These events, unfortunately, bear witness to Italy's increasingly obstructionist role in the Mediterranean, as the country continues to be the furthest outpost of "fortress" Europe, and the *mare nostrum* label has been appropriated in geopolitical terms to signal its retrenchment into exclusionary and ethnocentric attitudes toward the people of its southern and eastern shores.

Our project has attempted to present Italy's Mediterranean role in historical, philosophical, and cultural terms, mindful that, in the post–Cold War era, the country's institutions have been leaning more and more toward a Euro-Atlantic belonging, to which policies such as those aforementioned subscribe.[3] Our goal was to historicize and provide a perspective on a different type of belonging that arises from Italy's multimillenary history as a peninsula that stretches into the Mediterranean Sea, a belonging that has often erupted in conflict and war but also has expanded in openness toward exchanges, trade, and cultural cross-pollination. Additionally, in detailing the peninsula's history as a southern land "othered" by the Orientalizing gaze and colonial ambitions of physical and metaphorical invaders (e.g., Jesuit missionaries, Grand Tour visitors, foreign and national rulers, and northern industrialism), we have argued that present-day discourses *about* the South (be it the one represented by the southern shores of the Mediterranean or the Souths of the world) found apt equivalents in the sociocultural descriptions and stereotyping of the peninsula. Yet by juxtaposing them to discourses *from* the South that Italian economists, philosophers, and sociologists have formulated over the past forty years, we also hoped to show that alternative discourses based on revaluing certain aspects of southern thought and culture exist, thus offering the hope for broader understanding and future solutions that circumvent and transcend the parochial dichotomies embraced by Italy's and Europe's official channels, be they tied to culture, economics, or policy making.

Given our own background, it was natural to then explore how these alternative ways of thinking about Italy's Mediterranean belonging found expression in the cultural projects of Italian intellectuals and artists. The results, as we have shown without guiding them through preconceived positivist notions, are varied and cover a gamut of outcomes that go from nostalgia to despair—from condemnation to hope. Some reveal themselves to be dated by their Western-centric vision. Others highlight the damage that globalized capitalism has wrought on already corrupted sectors of southern culture, compounding the damage originally inflicted by phenomena such as *meridionalismo* and clientelism. Others yet maintain the hope that traditional values that the South cultivates more than other geopolitical regions (such as community, ancient symbolic rituals, slowness, and so on) might be rediscovered and help modify current cultural flattening and homologation. Finally, there are those who—more cynical, maybe, but also more tied to values of communal sharing and suffering—advocate a stoic embracing of those who cross from southern shores in search of new beginnings and belongings, mindful that this is not only their own history and origin but also their limit.

In the end, as Italy enters a new phase of its cultural and political history, dealing as it must with endemic financial and political corruption brought on, among others, by unfettered globalization, we wish to unite our voice with those we have presented in this work. We do not advocate a wistful and nostalgic return to mythical and mystifying "better days," in which we do not believe. Nor do we embrace fundamentalist positions that claim that the South, *tout-court*, is better than the alternatives offered by Western capitalism. Rather, in representing the conflicts generated by the meeting of North and South and of East and West in Italy, we want to highlight the cultural work that is being done to propose alternative models of coexistence to those that result from these often-destructive encounters. The local, the provincial, and the southern find their voices in the intellectual discourses we have presented in these pages. They do not reject modernity; they confront it and seek solutions, hoping to reinterpret both themselves and their opposite in a spirit of cooperation and measured engagement. In this light, we, too, offer our project. The hope is that these words, their history, and the world they portray can encourage further discussions about the Italy that might emerge from these meetings on its shores.

Notes

Chapter 1

1. "Mediterranean discourse has suffered from Mediterranean discursiveness: sun and sea, scent and color, sandy beaches and islands of fortune, girls maturing young and widows shrouded in black, ports and ships and *invitations au voyage*, journeys and wrecks and tales thereof, olives and oranges and myrtle, palms and pines and cypresses, pomp and poverty, reality and illusion, life and dreams [. . .] all description and repetition" (Matvejević, *Mediterranean* 12).

2. "Its boundaries are drawn in neither space nor time. There is in fact no way of drawing them [. . .] They are like a chalk circle that is constantly traced and erased, that the winds and the wave, that obligations and inspirations expand or reduce" (Matvejević, *Mediterranean* 10).

3. *De Mundo* means "internal sea." *De mundo* is attributed to Aristotle, though the attribution is disputed. For additional discussion on the name of the sea, see Burr.

4. For a discussion of the complex geography of the Mediterranean, see Bethemont; Braudel, *La Méditerranée*; Horden and Purcell; Perry; and Rackham and Rendell.

5. That is "because the Mediterranean is a succession, a combination of seas, divided in autonomous surfaces, with finite horizons and compartmentalized basins" (Braudel, "La mer" 58). Here and throughout the book we have translated excerpts of texts that are cited in a language other than English in the bibliography.

6. As recalled by King's "Introduction," the region has witnessed rainfalls of epic proportion, such as the one that occurred in 1981 on the island of Cyprus, where 192 millimeters of rain fell in a span of four hours (7). See also Braudel: "The rivers, dry for months, swell up; floods are frequent and violent in the plains of Roussillon, Mitidja, Tuscany, Andalusia or in the fields of Salonika" ("La terre" 25). A detailed account of Mediterranean floods and catastrophes is contained in Horden and Purcell's chapter "Mediterranean Catastrophes" from *The Corrupting Sea* (298–341). The Mediterranean came into existence after a flood of such proportions filled the basin with the water of the Atlantic in just a couple of years (Abulafia, *The Great Sea* xxvii).

7. Abulafia notes the ease of navigation, attributing it to currents that "follow the coasts of Africa eastwards from Gibraltrar, swing past Israel and Lebanon and around Cyprus, and then round the Aegean, Adriatic, and Tyrrhenian Seas and along the French and Spanish coasts back to the pillars of Hercules" (*The Great Sea* xxviii).

8. "This logical priority of the sea [. . .] resulted principally from the central-ity of the sea to communications. Despite the obvious dangers, sea transport [. . .] surpassed land communications in ease as to make of the Mediterranean a milieu of interlocking routes onto which the coastlands and harbors faced" (Horden and Purcell 11). We should note, however, that while the primacy of the sea in enabling contacts remains undisputed, exchanges took place across land as well. For discussions of interactions across land, see Horden and Purcell, especially the chapter "Connectivity" (123–172).

9. Abulafia's *The Great Sea* is the most comprehensive history of the Mediterra-nean, providing a discussion of the Mediterranean from 22,000 BCE to 2010 organized in five distinct periods.

10. "The Mediterranean is an ensemble of roads of sea and land tied together; of roads but one could say also of small, medium, and large cities holding hands. Roads and more roads, that is to say, an entire system of circulation. It is through this system that we can arrive at comprehending the Mediterranean which is, with all the force of the term, a space-movement" (Braudel, "La mer" 76–77).

11. "Thus is created a phenomenon of extraordinary novelty, a cosmopolitan cul-ture is born where one can recognize the contributions of different civilizations built on the shores or in the middle of the sea. Some of these civilizations are founded on empires: Egypt, Mesopotamia, the Asia Minor of the Hittites; oth-ers develop on the sea and are sustained by cities: the Syro-Lebanese coast, Crete, later on Mycene. But now they all communicate with one other" (Brau-del, "L'aube" 91–92).

12. See Suano, "The First Trading Empires" 67–93.

13. There are various hypotheses for the collapse of these ancient civilizations, ranging from the arrival of the mysterious "Sea People" to cataclysmic events that might have caused food shortages and mass migration. For additional dis-cussions, see Suano; and Torelli. See also Abulafia, *The Great Sea* 48–52, where the "Sea People" are identified as the Peleshet, the Tjekker, the Shekelesh, the Denyen, and the Weshesh.

14. Their people called themselves Canaanites but were described by Herodotus as Phoenicians.

15. Most notably, they defended themselves from the Persian kings and in particu-lar Xerxes, whom they defeated in the battles of Salamis and Platea (450 and 451 BCE, respectively).

16. For additional discussion of Rome's advance into the Mediterranean, see Brau-del, "The Roman Takeover" 271–315.

17. Although it is difficult to provide an estimate of the urban centers created by Rome, Proudfoot lists 600 in Greece and Italy by the second century CE, 150 in Iberia, 50 in Mediterranean France, and 60 in Dalmatia. See Proudfoot, "The Greco-Roman Mediterranean" 66–71. Her list follows Pounds's *An His-torical Geography of Europe.*

18. For a succinct account of the Arabs' advance, see Pryor, "The Mediterranean Breaks Up."

19. *Dar-al-Islàm* refers to territories that were already Islamic, whereas *dar-al-Harb* refers to territories with the potential for expansion of Islamic religion.

20. "The Crusades mark an important moment in Western expansion, the begin-ning of the process of reversal of forces in the Mediterranean, to the advantage of the Latin West. In the history of the Inner Sea, the Crusades brought a major

expansion of sea traffic and began the Western colonization of Islamic lands" (Balard 189).

21. See Metcalfe's *The Muslims of Medieval Sicily*, especially the chapter on the colony of Lucera.

22. For additional discussion on the Jewish expulsion, see Abulafia, *The Great Sea* 470–476. A concise account of the expulsion of the Moors is contained in Malik's *Islam and Modernity*, especially the chapter "The Saga of Muslim Spain: Pluralism to Elimination" (18–37).

23. For further discussion on the Ottoman Empire, see Proudfoot, "The Ottoman Mediterranean"; and Greene, "Resurgent Islam."

24. "In 1950, the Spanish white metal begins to make its way to Italy. Trunks of *reals*, of 'pieces of eight' are regularly transported by galleys from Barcelona to Genoa [. . .] The town of Saint George becomes the financial center of Europe [. . .] A Genoese system of payment is created with the fairs of Plaisance, established in 1579. Historians have even taken the habit of referring to a 'Genoese century,' which began in 1557 and ended around 1622–1627" (Braudel, "l'Historie" 181).

25. Graham follows the thesis of Wallerstein's *The Modern World System*. But see also Malik: "The queen of the sea and explorer of the New World was soon isolated [. . .] Spain, during the next five centuries dismally lacked what it had witnessed before 1492 [. . .] as north-western Europe was industrializing, Spain slumbered on in the feudal age. Its economic and political development was retarded. The forcible evictions and large migrations to the colonies depleted the store of skilled manpower" (25).

26. "Mediterraneanism" is Herzfeld's neologism on "Orientalism," the concept popularized by Said in the book by the same title, *Orientalism* (1978). See Herzfeld, "Practical Mediterraneanism" 48.

27. For additional discussion, see Banton; and Westwood and Rattansi.

28. See Saul, *Russia and the Mediterranean*.

29. "The model of the nation-state was not born on the shores of the Mediterranean. It came from outside" (Aymard, "Migrazioni" 220). See also Guarracino 171; and Proudfoot, "Ottoman" 104.

30. See, for example, the resistance in Algeria led by the emir Abd el-Kader, defeated only in 1847, followed by new uprisings in 1871, or the struggles in Morocco (1844) and Egypt (1882).

31. For additional discussions, see Bono, *Un altro mediterraneo* 206–210; Barbieri and Visconti; and Curcio.

32. Reawakening Italy's grandeur in the Mediterranean is central to Vincenzo Gioberti's *Del primato morale e civile degli italiani* (1843) and *Del rinnovamento civile d'Italia* (1851), Giacomo Durando's *Della nazionalità italiana* (1846), and Cesare Balbo's *Delle speranze d'Italia* (1844) and the posthumous *Pensieri sulla storia d'Italia*. But even Mazzini, one of the founding fathers of the Italian Risorgimento, believed Tunisia to be suitable for an Italian expansion (Bono, *Un altro mediterraneo* 208).

33. Defeats include Amba Alagi (1895), Adua (1896), and others.

34. See the statements by Eugenio d'Ors in *L'Unamuno considerat com un home que tè raó* (as cited in Bilbeny 134–135). D'Ors defines culture as a Greco-Roman and Catalonian creation to which Islam has made no contributions.

35. Bono recalls a significant episode of the French, Italian, and Spanish doctrine of Latinity of the interwar era: the centenary celebrations of France's domination

over Algeria in 1930, when the presence of French in Algeria, Spaniards in Oran, and Italians in Constantina was underscored to demonstrate their legitimate claims as the heirs of the Roman world (*Un altro mediterraneo* 215–216).

36. For more information, see also Témime.

37. For additional discussions on the legacy of Braudel, see the volume edited by Piterberg, Ruiz, and Symcox.

38. Exemplary works of postwar anthropology are Pitt-Rivers's *The People of the Sierra* (1954), Banfield's *Amoral Familism* (1958), Peristiany's *Honor and Shame* (1966), and Campbell's *Honour, Family and Patronage* (1964). For additional discussion on the post–World War II reception of Braudel by anthropologists, see Benigno.

39. The Atlantic Chart of 1941 concerning self-determination (which the American and British undoubtedly intended for Europe against Nazism) played a major role in decolonization. Equally important were Western socialist and liberal ideas, whose effects ran counter to the colonizers' hegemonic intentions (Bono, *Un altro mediterraneo* 151).

40. Arab opposition to the state of Israel led to the Six Day War, during which Egypt, Jordan, and Syria lost Sinai, the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and the Golan. After the Yom Kippur War of 1973, Sinai was returned, but the Palestinian-Israeli question has never been solved. Also unresolved remains the question of Cyprus, divided between Turks and Greeks since 1974.

41. For more information, see Rizzi and Khader.

42. This was a major concern of the EEC after the coup d'état in Greece (1967), the Arab-Israeli War (1967), and the revolution in Libya (1969) led by the recently executed Gaddafi (Jones 155–163).

43. Italy's role in these initiatives was significant. As Jones comments, "the underlying concept can be traced back to 1964 when the Italian government issued a statement setting out the need for an overall policy towards the region" (157).

44. This euphoria was famously captured in Francis Fukuyama's *The End of History*, which celebrated the collapse of communism as a sign that Marxism was no longer a viable political and social theory.

45. See Calleya; and Fenech.

46. These initiatives include "Med-Urbs," "Med-Campus," "Med-Invest," and "Med-Media" (Jones 160).

47. "Mediterraneanization" is a neologism that emerges from "globalization" (Morris).

48. For further discussion of Barcelona, see Marchisio; Adler, Bicchi, Crawford, and Del Sarto; Pepicelli, *Un nuovo ordine mediterraneo*; and Zolo.

49. See also Khader and Habeer.

50. "The main worries for Europe and the motivations of the accord are the security and the stability of the Mediterranean" (Bono, *Un altro mediterraneo* 164).

51. Bono's concerns are echoed by Jones: "The conference [of Barcelona], from the EU perspective, marked the beginning of an ambitious policy of cooperation with the south which would form a 'counterpart to the policy of openness to the east' and would give the 'EU's external action' its geopolitical coherence [. . .] The EU's view is that free trade and financial assistance will increase stability and increase prosperity in the southern and eastern Mediterranean, which in turn will underpin the ongoing (though turbulent) Middle East peace process and promote political pluralism, as well as help to damp down some of the 'root causes' of emigration" (Jones 155, 161). Reflecting further on the Barcelona

conference, Jones observes that "the conference was primarily to buy security" while containing, reducing, and limiting the immigrant tide that was especially strong from areas of the Maghreb and Mashreq toward France, Italy, and Spain (ibid. 162).

52. For a discussion of the Turkish case, see Barbé esp. 127–135. Barbé makes a strong case for the integration of Turkey in the European Union, claiming that while it has a strong Islamic heritage, it was founded on a project of Western civilization initiated by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk during the course of his presidency from 1922 to 1938.

53. In the words of Tariq Ramadan, "it is important to remind Europe of its own history. All indigenous Europeans forget that Muslims are part of European history. They speak as if Muslims 'have come late.' There is a selective memory in Europe. Yet, Islam's legacy in Europe is very substantial. Muslims have been part of the building of the European conscience and of the European mind. This is not a process of Islamization but a reminder to Europeans of their own past" (213).

54. For additional discussion on Europe and Islam, see AlSayyad and Castells; and Hunter.

55. Scholarly publications on the Mediterranean have multiplied to the point that we cannot provide an exhaustive bibliography. Morris's "Mediterraneanization" provides a good statistical table that illustrates the growth of journals and books with the title "Mediterranean" from data compiled by the Association of Research Libraries Statistics from the mid-1970s onward (34–35). See also Alcock's description of the growth in Mediterranean serials from the mid-1980s onward. In "Asimmetrie mediterranee," Dainotto sums up, with a degree of humor, the growing interest in the Mediterranean: "From a perhaps not statistically accurate and certainly not exhaustive count in the library catalogs of my university, one finds 107 books with '*Mediterraneo*' in their title; 229 with '*Méditérranée*'; and 1260 with 'Mediterranean,' more than a third of them published in the last fifteen years. Something even more noteworthy is that the interest in the Mediterranean is by no means confined to countries in the region, but is truly a global affair. Books sell, centers are born and Mediterranean Studies, from Tunis and Bari have arrived in Ottawa, Durham (NC), Sydney and Kathmandu" (5).

56. Braudel, in "The Roman Takeover," comments extensively on Rome's Hellenization, noting that "with the healthy appetite of a young civilization, Rome absorbed everything indiscriminately" (304) for hundreds of years before transforming its extensive borrowings into a culture during the later period of the empire. Coarelli attributes the success of the Roman Empire to the presence of an elite still deeply permeated by Hellenic culture and thus better suited to understand the eastern Mediterranean that emerged after the conquests of Alexander (147).

57. In Gruen's *Cultural Identity in the Ancient Mediterranean*, see essays by Bartman, Butcher, David, Gruen, Linant de Bellefonds, Swetnam-Burland, and Wallace-Hadrill.

58. See Arnaldi.

59. In 120 BCE, Cymbrians and Teutons moved toward Rome, bringing with them women and children, though the conquest of Gaul provided a barrier to stem their advance. The threat from the East was equally great, with tribes of Parthians advancing into Roman territories.

60. See Isaac; and Bartman. The latter shows how the portraits commissioned by provincial administrators expressed both the process of Romanization and the maintenance of ethnic features that resulted in a "cultural hybrid" (245).

61. While the Great Schism divided the Church into the Eastern Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church, disputes had taken place much earlier over the use of images, Eucharist's bread, and so on. For additional discussion, see Graham and Bartlett.

62. See Cardini; Menocal; Villanueva; Baralt; Vernet; Benjamin; Agius and Netton; Durand; Greene, *A Shared World*; Abulafia, *Mediterranean Encounters*; and Bulliet and Vanoli.

63. Many other products reached European markets: bananas, artichokes, eggplants, limes, watermelon, rice, spinach, oranges, and spices such as ginger and pepper, coming to the Muslim world from the Spice Islands of the Far East and, from there, imported westward.

64. As Van De Mieroop recalls, Braudel did not provide much information about the eastern Mediterranean "due to his lack of familiarity with Ottoman sources [. . .] a shortcoming he acknowledged" (118) and focused primarily on the western Mediterranean. For additional discussion on the current interest in the Ottoman Empire, see Lucchetta; Motta; and Poumarède.

65. The backing of the Orthodox Church could not only prevent a united Christian front against the Ottoman Empire but also contain the Latin Christians who had already plundered Constantinople during the fourth crusade, when the city was still under Byzantine control.

66. Bono observes that after the conquest of Constantinople by Mehmed II, the sultan shortened the three days of customary plunder and allowed the people to return to their houses while maintaining several Christian churches (*Un altro mediterraneo* 53). Guarracino recalls how Bayazid II (1481–1512) criticized the expulsion of Jews and Muslims from Spain, noting that these expulsions were impoverishing Spain but enriching the land of the Ottomans that gave them safe haven (171). Likewise, Molly Greene writes, "It was a source of pride, rather than weakness, for the sultan that he ruled over such a diverse collections of nations and religions" ("Resurgent Islam" 232).

67. The work of Shlomo Dov Goiten needs to be acknowledged here for the influence it exerted on the new generation of economic historians. In *A Mediterranean Society* (1967–1988), Goiten recovered a wealth of papers contained in Fustat, next to modern Cairo, dating from around 950 to 1200. Through painstaking work, he demonstrated that Jewish merchants traded with partners from *al-Andalus*, Byzanthium, and Sicily even in periods of great tensions with Islam. For additional discussion on the merit of Goiten's work, see Horden and Purcell 34–35.

68. Italian merchants were favored by the concessions of rights gained by Christian states during the Crusades: "In each port of Syria and Palestine which had been conquered with their help, the maritime republics obtained from the Kings of Jerusalem, the princes of Antioch or the counts of Tripoli very advantageous concessions of rights. Entire quarters passed into the hands of the Italian communes [. . .] Acre, Tyre, Beirut, Tripoli, Laodicea and Antioch were divided [. . .] among the Italian merchants" (Balard 191).

69. Greene writes, "The Ottoman sultans had no desire to prevent Western merchants, or any other merchants, for that matter, from trading in Ottoman lands [. . .] It would have made no sense for them to do so; the customs revenues

from trade was a vital source of revenue and of course the goods themselves were important as well" ("Resurgent Islam" 226–227). Studies about tolls on trade in Fleet's *European and Islamic trade in the early Ottoman state* demonstrate this desire, as does the Ottomans' rebuilding of Byzantine trade posts after the fall of Constantinople, when the business centers and buildings they utilized needed reconstruction (ibid. 227).

70. See, for example, Dakhlia; and Cifoletti.

71. See Bono, *Corsari nel Mediterraneo* and *Il Mediterraneo da Lepanto a Barcellona*; Bresc; R. Davis; Sánchez Fernández; Stella; and Wettinger.

72. Bono writes of a "black African slave period" (*Un altro mediterraneo* 85) during which black Africans resided in the islands' urban centers but also in the countryside where they tended the fields.

73. Examples are *Real Casa Santa della redenzione de' Cattivi* in Naples (1548), *Opera Pia del Riscatto* in Rome (1581), and others (see Bono, *Un altro mediterraneo* 99–100, 100n36). For additional discussion, see Porres Alonso.

74. In addition to Bennassar, see also Scaraffia; and Garcia-Arenal.

75. In sixteenth-century Algiers, there were pashas from Calabria, Hungary, Liguria, Sardinia, and Venice.

76. Nonetheless, there were famous cases of Muslim converts, such as al-Hasan ibn Muhammad al-Wazzan al-Fasi, known as Leo Africanus, who was "gifted" to Pope Leo X before writing his *Descrittione dell'Africa*.

77. "The Latins in the crusader states constituted 15 to 20 percent of the population, perhaps 100,000 to 140,000 people. Pilgrims and Crusaders chose to take up residence in the Kingdom of Jerusalem or on the coast of Syria, without planning to return to the West. They settled in towns, to be sure, but also, as recent research shows, in the countryside [. . .] Venice systematically organized the Latin settlement of Crete which was divided into sixths or *sestieri* just like the mother-city herself" (Balard 198).

78. The bibliography of artistic expressions is too extensive to be included here, but a good anthology is Ferrini's *Lingue di mare*, which contains writings by Edwar al-Kharrat, Mariano Baino, Anilda Ibrahimi, Drago Jančar, Abdellatif Laâbi, Ohran Pamuk, Vesna Parun, Niki Ladaki Philippou, Eloy J. Santos, Giacomo Trinci, and others. But also see Ferrini's *Venature mediterranee*, a collection of interviews with important figures in Mediterranean studies, such as Vincenzo Consolo, Erri de Luca, Amin Maalouf, and Predrag Matvejević. A good overview of playwrights, film makers, and musicians is provided in the volume edited by Bannour, Bensalah, Chadli, Conoscenti, Dibie, Monleón, and Scarnecchia.

79. For Mediterranean "difference" as a response to Huntington's model, see Barbé. Latouche's discussion of the Mediterranean as an oppositional model to ideas of Western modernity as progress and development is well exemplified in his *The Westernization of the World* and *Le Défi di Minerve*.

80. See, for example, Dainotto: "The Mediterranean speaks of *peace, coexistence and cooperation*. It has *one logos*, *one* logic of unity and harmony. Its monolinguism is one that turns diversity into an excuse and makes the old Kantian project of perpetual peace its sole objective; an objective at the altar of which, in Kantian-like fashion, everything (including diversity) can be sacrificed" (4). With regard to the lack of resonance of the Mediterranean "ideal" in the Arab and Islamic world, see the three volumes of *Rappresentare il Mediterraneo*, by Khuri and Beydoun, Barrada and Qadduri, and al-Kharrat and Afifi, respectively.

Chapter 2

1. On the foreign front, Italian city-states faced a number of challenges that unified them despite centuries of rivalries between them. The Ottomans' conquest of Constantinople in 1453 created barriers to the commercial trading routes of Genoa and Venice. Florence, Milan, Naples, and Venice joined Pope Nicolas V in the Italian League of 1454, which failed shortly thereafter when the Ottomans attacked Friuli in 1470 and Otranto, in Apulia, in 1480. With the ascent to the throne of Aragon and Valencia by Alfonso V in 1416 and to the Kingdom of Naples from 1442 to his death in 1458, wars ensued between the Spaniards and Florence, Genoa, Milan, and Venice. France was also a major destabilizing factor. Emerging victorious from the Hundred Years War (1337–1453), it laid claim to the Kingdom of Naples by dynastic rights acquired though marriage. As a result, by 1494 a number of wars devastated the Italian Peninsula.

2. For an overview of the apparatus of court ceremonials in the Kingdom of Naples from 1503 to 1707, see Guarino, *Representing the King's Splendor*. In the second chapter, "The Power of Precedence: Social and Political Hierarchies in Civic Processions," Guarino discusses the elaborate processions that representative members of the aristocracy staged as conciliatory devices to solve crises ushered in by earthquakes, famines, plagues, and uprisings.

3. Mozzillo's citation is from a letter by Bandini titled *Francisci Bandini de Baroncellis in laudem Neapolitanae civitatis et Fernandi Regis brevis epistula ad amicum*.

4. In "L'Italia nello specchio del 'Grand Tour,'" de Seta offers an overview of travelers to Italy from medieval pilgrims to twentieth-century mass tourism but does not discuss the Jesuits. See also de Seta, *L'Italia del Grand Tour*. Likewise, Mozzillo ignores the Jesuits in *Passaggio a mezzogiorno* and *Viaggiatori stranieri nel Sud*.

5. See O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*.

6. Concerns might have circulated even earlier. Francesco Carafa, Archbishop from 1541 to 1544, and other papal visitors, such as Tommaso Orfini, had produced extensive accounts of the southeastern territories of the kingdom, noting that *Terra di Otranto* and *Terra di Bari* were more civilized than Basilicata and Calabria (Selwyn 44–48).

7. See Selwyn; Novi Chavarria, *Il governo delle anime*; Prosperi, *Tribunali della coscienza*; and Roscioni, *Il desiderio delle Indie*.

8. Of course, Italy had always been a stop for travelers headed toward the Holy Land. In the early Middle Ages, rich pilgrims traversed northern Italy to embark in Venice, while poorer ones journeyed southward to the port of Otranto. In addition, by the fourteenth century, Rome, as the undisputed center of Christianity, was a destination for many religious travelers (de Seta, *L'Italia del Grand Tour* 9).

9. A few representative titles are Riedesel, *Reise durch Sicilie und Grossgriechenland* (1771); de Sade, *Voyage d'Italie* (1775); Vivant Denon, *Voyage en Sicile* (1788); Dryden, *A Voyage to Sicily and Malta* (1776); Swinburne, *Travels in the Two Sicilies, in the Years 1777, 1778, 1779, 1780* (1790); Creuzé de Lesser, *Voyage en Italie et Sicile fait en 1801 et 1802* (1806); Madame de Staël, *Corinne ou l'Italie* (1807), a novel based on the diary of her travels, *Les carnets de voyage*; and Goethe, *Italienische Reise* (1816–1817, 1829).

10. Lesser's original observation is in *Voyage en Italie et en Sicile* (1806).

11. For a complete chronological list, see de Seta, *L'Italia del Grand Tour* 165; and Mozzillo, *Viaggiatori stranieri* 90–94.

12. The bibliography is extensive, but good discussions, besides the already mentioned titles by Mozzillo and de Seta, are the following: Black, *The British Abroad*; Hibbert, *The Grand Tour*; Maczak, *Viaggi e viaggiatori*; Paloscia, *L'Italia dei grandi viaggiatori*; Richter, *Alla ricerca del Sud*; Richter and Kanceff, *La scoperta del Sud*; and Venturi, "L'Italia fuori d'Italia."

13. As cited in Fliri (75), from Herder's *Briefe und Aufzeichnungen über eine Reise nach Italien (1788/89)*.

14. As cited in Fliri (75), from Goethe's *Italienische Reise, Werke*.

15. As cited in Richter, "L'incontro nell'immaginario" 14–15, from Dupaty, *Lettres sur l'Italie* 140.

16. As cited in Richter, "L'incontro" 15, from Herder, *Briefe und Aufzeichnungen* 20.

17. As cited in Richter, "L'incontro" 15, from Goethe, *Tagerbücher* 306.

18. The reference is to Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

19. As cited in Schenda 121–122, from Meyer, *Neapel und die Neapolitaner*.

20. As cited in Schenda 122, from Löher, *Sizilien und Neapel*.

21. As cited in Schenda 123, from Allmers, *Römische Slendertage*.

22. The Hottentots, or Khoikhoi, are an African tribe living near the Cape of Good Hope that came to occupy, in the European imaginary, the last rung on the ladder of humanity.

23. Italian anthologies devoted to travelers of the eighteenth century, such as Bonora's *Letterati memorialisti e viaggiatori del Settecento* and Vincenti's *Viaggiatori del Settecento*, list only Lazzaro Spallanzani as a native traveler. Even in the nineteenth century, Italians do not figure among the writers of travel literature, and only Girolamo Vitelli is mentioned in Treves's *Lo studio dell'antichità classica dell'Ottocento*. More appear among the authors of *memorialistica* anthologized in Cappuccio's *Memorialisti dell'Ottocento*, but even their number is small (Placanica 167).

24. See also Petrusewicz, *Come il Mezzogiorno*; and Wong, *Race and the Nation*, especially the first chapter, "The Dawning of the Mezzogiorno: The South in the Construction of Italy."

25. Among these events are the short-lived Parthenopean Republic; the trials, executions, and deportations that ensued; Napoleon's appointment of Joseph and then Murat in 1806; and the return of the Bourbons after the fall of Napoleon in 1815.

26. As cited in Petraccone, *Le due civiltà* 6, from La Farina, *Epistolario* (1869).

27. Villari, who had relocated to Florence from his native Naples in 1848, represented the South as the place where all the social ills of the newly formed nation had condensed. While Villari intended to inform his northern audience of issues in the South to foster change, his writings helped codify subsequent assessments of southern backwardness, crime, poverty, dereliction, and so on. In the words of Nelson Moe, "Villari elaborates what will prove to be a defining feature of Meridionalist discourse from this point onwards: the exceptional nature of the South, its peculiarity and radical difference with respect to the rest of Italy and, indeed, modern European civilization as a whole" ("The Emergence" 54).

28. Born in the 1980s, the leagues espouse a federalist and, at times, polemical secessionist agenda founded upon an imaginary territory named "Padania."

In 1991, the political party Northern League was born, playing a significant role in coalitions that brought Berlusconi to power. For additional discussion, see Diamanti, *Il male del Nord*.

29. For additional discussion, see Vöchting, *La questione meridionale*; Compagna, *La questione meridionale*; and Cafagna, *Dualismo e sviluppo*.

30. See Urbinati, "The Souths of Antonio Gramsci" 135.

31. See Lombroso, *L'uomo bianco* and *In Calabria*; Ferri, *L'omicidio nell'antropologia criminale*, *Sociologia criminale*, and *Studi sulla criminalità*; Niceforo, *La delinquenza in Sardegna* and *L'Italia barbara contemporanea*; and Sergi, *Arii e italici*.

32. See Dickie, "Stereotypes"; Gibson; Gribaudi, "Images of the South" 83–113; Moe, *The View from the Vesuvius*; Petraccone; Pick; Teti; and Wong 47–77.

33. See especially Gramsci, "Observations on Folklore."

34. The notebooks were published at first in a thematic edition by Einaudi between 1949 and 1951. This was superseded by the critical edition prepared by Valentino Gerratana in 1975. Here we are using the English edition translated and curated by Joseph Buttigieg and Antonio Callari.

35. See Castronovo, "Potere economico"; and Giarrizzo, "Il Mezzogiorno" 162–176.

36. See Castronovo, "Il periodo della ricostruzione."

37. The preface to the first edition is contained in the English translation of Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, of 1972.

38. See also the concluding paragraph of the 1972 edition: "I am by temperament a 'structuralist,' little tempted by the event, or even by the short-term conjecture which is after all merely a grouping of events in the same area [. . .] I have therefore sought out, within the framework of a geographical study, those local, permanent, unchanging and much repeated features which are the constant of Mediterranean history [. . .] These provide the reference grid as it were" (Braudel, *The Mediterranean* 1,244). This same desire for unity will lead Braudel, in *Capitalism and Material Life, 1400–1800*, to seek a Mediterranean unity in economic ties, beginning with the Italian cities of Venice and Genoa.

39. We should note that the one work that remains profoundly inspired by Braudel is none else but Horden and Purcell's own *The Corrupting Sea*, to our knowledge the first post-Braudelian attempt at a second, unified history of the Mediterranean. In the authors' words, "the subject of this work is the human history of the Mediterranean Sea and its coastlands over some three millennia. Its immediate contention is that this history can profitably be treated as material for a unified and distinct discipline" (9).

40. See Amelang, "Braudel and the Cultural History of the Mediterranean."

41. As Dei explains, decolonization and independent state formations might have influenced the renewed interest in southern Europe since fieldwork was impacted by major political and social changes in the ex-colonies (22).

42. Pitt-Rivers's main area of analysis is the village of Alcalà de la Sierra, which was in reality Frazalema in the Sierra of Càdiz, but his study makes general claims for the entire European side of the Mediterranean.

43. See Herzfeld, *Anthropology through the Looking Glass*; Piña-Cabral; Llobera; and Dei. For a defence of Mediterranean anthropology, see Davis, "Modelli del Mediterraneo" and *Antropologia delle società mediterranee*.

44. We will discuss this phenomenon in greater detail in the chapter on music (Chapter 4), as *tarantismo* and the dance/ritual tied to it, *tarantella*, have been the center of significant revivals in southern Italy.
45. For additional discussion, see Cherchi and Cherchi; and Di Nola.
46. See De Martino, *Il mondo magico* 177–185, 190, 192–193. Also see De Martino's essay "Intorno a una storia del mondo popolare subalterno."
47. See De Martino, "Il folklore," "Il folklore progressivo," and "Gramsci e il folklore."
48. See also Saunders, "Contemporary Italian Cultural Anthropology."
49. Many of the positions of the *neomeridionalismo* are found in the first issue of the journal *Meridiana*. See "Presentazione" *Meridiana* 9–15. We should also recall the importance of the journal *Passato e presente* in refocusing histories of the Italian South.
50. See Bevilacqua, *Breve storia dell'Italia*; Davis, "Casting Off the 'Southern Problem'"; Giarrizzo, *Mezzogiorno senza meridionalismo*; Gribaudi, *Mediatori* and *A Eboli*; Lumley and Morris, *The New History of the Italian South*; and Morris, "Challenging *Meridionalismo*."

Chapter 3

1. See the following definition by Francesca Saffioti: "The geo-symbolic dimension is fostered by the indissoluble synthesis between the qualitative traits and the cultural construction of each space; that is the reason why it can unite the geographic dimension (that is not objective nature) with the symbolic dimension (that is not subjective perception)" ("Il 'Sud'" 4). As always, the English translation of bibliographical references in Italian are ours.
2. Refer to Chapter 2 for the extensive historical tracing of this discourse from its origins up to the work of the *neomeridionalisti*.
3. In *Land und Meer*, Carl Schmitt drew inspiration from Ernst Kapp, who, in *Philosophische oder vergleichende allgemeine Erdkunde* (1845), had classified civilizations according to the criterion of water. In Kapp's account, the Assyrians, Babylonians, and Egyptians had developed along the rivers of the Tigris, Euphrates, and Nile. Greco-Roman and medieval civilizations had flourished around the landlocked Mediterranean sea, while the ocean was the space upon which the hegemony of the Anglo-Saxon world was established, despite the discovery of the New World by the Iberians. Schmitt's geophilosophy transformed Kapp's classification into an opposition between the ocean, a space of conquest and absence of limits, and the Mediterranean, a sea located between lands and therefore limiting the ocean's expansionistic reach.
4. See also note 3.
5. For more details, refer back to our discussion of Valéry and others in Chapter 1 of this book.
6. The English is from our translation of Cacciari's Italian text; however, a selection of Cacciari's works, edited by Carrera and translated by Verdicchio, has been collected in the volume *The Unpolitical*.
7. See also Derrida, *Specters of Marx*.
8. We translated *Il pensiero meridiano* for Fordham University Press in 2012 as *Southern Thoughts and Other Essays on the Mediterranean*, from which we will cite in this chapter. Other Cassano works on the Mediterranean are *Paeninsula*,

Homo civicus, the monumental *L'alternativa mediterranea*, and *Tre modi di vedere il Sud*.

9. Not only do Cacciari and Cassano refer to each other's works; Cassano presented *L'alternativa mediterranea* with Cacciari in Venice in 2008, noting, "We agree on a lot of things" (personal correspondence with Franco Cassano). For references, see Cassano, *Il pensiero meridiano* 25ff; and Cacciari, *Geofilosofia dell'Europa* 22.

10. Among the authors that recur frequently in Cassano's work are Lothar Baier, Michael Blayr, Thomas H. Eriksen, James Gleick, David Harvey, Carl Honoré, Zaki Laîdi, Serge Latouche, Paul Virilio, and Immanuel Wallerstein.

11. Cassano follows the insights of Ulrick Beck's *Risk Society: Toward a New Modernity* and especially of Serge Latouche's *The Westernization of the World*: "The individualistic outlook corrodes social bonds. It gnaws like a cancer at the fabric of traditional solidarity. What makes individualism irresistible is that the individual always perceives it as liberation. It does indeed deliver the individual from constraints and open up limitless possibilities but it does so at the expense of the solidarity which keeps community together" (Latouche, *Westernization* 97).

12. We refer here to the section of *Southern Thought and Other Essays on the Mediterranean* called "*Homo currens*" (41–60).

13. For an excellent critique of the limits of Hardt and Negri's discussion of "empire," see Santiago Castro-Gómez, "Le chapitre manquant d'Empire." Castro-Gómez praises Hardt and Negri's examination of how modern sovereignty evolved into postmodernity, imperialism into empire, and Fordism into post-Fordism but also argues that their study misses the passage from colonialism to neocolonialism. To Gómez, this passage is amply illustrated in current attempts to patent biological diversity and premodern forms of knowledge of non-Western societies.

14. See Bauman, *Wasted Lives*; and Sennett, *Corrosion*.

15. Against the thesis of Hardt and Negri, Latin American thinkers have developed the category "coloniality of power" to argue that, despite postmodern formations of globalization (i.e., the immateriality of labor and the end of the nation-state), colonialism endures. See especially Mignolo, "Colonialidad global" and *Local Histories*. Compare with Dussel, "Europa," and "Beyond Eurocentrism"; Lander, *La colonialidad*; and Quijano, "Colonialidad del poder."

16. We (and Cassano) are referring to Ngugi wa Thiong'o's famous *Decolonizing the Mind*.

17. Our reference is to Chakrabarty.

18. See also Cassano, "Il Mediterraneo." Here Cassano points to Hegel's philosophy of history as absolute truth, developing spatially from a European (northern) center and subsuming all other cultures within: "Only this wider notion allows one to recognize Western fundamentalism, the arrogance that leads it to present itself as the highest form of civilization and, therefore, as universal therapy. After all, this ambition to reduce the *pluriversum* of the world to a *universum*, a single direction, one's own, is not a chance accident, but originates in the same metaphoric meaning of the word Occident, the strong relationship, highlighted by Hegel, between that word and the idea of sunset. The West is convinced to be the future of the East. If History, like the sun, arose in the East (*orior*), the West, as the land of sunsets, is its epilogue, a more evolved and mature stage. The progress of History coincides with its continued going westward, with becoming the West of the world" (51–52).

19. For a more extensive discussion of the *nóstos*, see our discussion of Consolo and Abate in Chapter 6.

20. See also Cassano, "Il Mediterraneo" esp. 58–59, and "Necessità del Mediterraneo" 84–86.

21. Some of the work of the Italian Heideggerean group can be consulted at www .geofilosofia.it.

22. See Resta, "Atlantici o mediterranei?" and "Europa mediterranea"; and Bonesio and Resta, *Intervista sulla Geofilosofia.*

23. "There are no higher or lower cultures," writes Camus in "The New Mediterranean Culture" (191).

24. In "Prometheus," Camus argued that Mediterranean culture could temper the excesses of the cult of technology by pointing to "the very humanism that he [Prometheus] was the first to symbolize" (139), the whole of man's complexity exemplified by the Titan's gifts of fire and technology but also liberty and art: "Prometheus was the hero who loved men enough to give them fire and liberty, technology and art. Today, mankind needs and cares only for technology. We rebel through our machines, holding art and what art implies as an obstacle and a symbol of slavery. But what characterizes Prometheus is that he cannot separate machines from art" (138–139).

25. Here Camus expanded on the Mediterranean values of measures and limits that he had briefly addressed in the 1937 lecture. European civilization, he argued, exiled beauty and embraced reason. By doing so, it lost dialectical tension and, with it, the Greek sense of limit and balance: "Greek thought was always based on the idea of limits. Nothing was carried to extremes, neither religion nor reason [. . .] It gave everything its share, balancing light with shade. But the Europe we know, eager for the conquest of totality, is the daughter of excess [. . .] In our madness we push back the eternal limits [. . .] Nemesis, goddess of moderation, not of vengeance, is watching [. . .] Equity, for [the Greeks], supposed a limit" ("Helen's" 148–149).

26. Saffioti recognizes the significance of Cassano, noting that his *Il pensiero meridiano* "has inspired the atmosphere of this book" (*Geofilosofia*, 4). But see also Saffioti, "Il 'Sud.'"

27. Other thinkers contributed to this volume, including Giorgio Baratta, Giuseppe Cantillo, Francesco Garritano, Giuseppe Prestipino, and Vito Teti. Since their reflections are less germane to the philosophical discourse described here, they are not included in our discussion.

28. Bevilacqua writes that Cassano's and Alcaro's work "reinforces and furthers" that of historians and social scientists of *neomeridionalismo* (*Sull'identità* viii). See also Chapter 3 in this book.

29. This preface is included in Cassano's *Southern Thought and Other Essays on the Mediterranean*, under the title "Prologue: Parallels and Meridians" (xxxiii–lv).

30. See also Cassano, *Southern Thought and Other Essays* xxxiii: "Herein lies the main aim of this prologue: to reconstruct the intersection of arguments formulated in *Southern Thought* so as to allow the discussion to continue on more precise foundations. The one who writes has not arrived to the South and to Southern thought from a 'we' or a sudden passion for identity, but from the category of the 'other,' from a meditation on the shadowy side of every identity [. . .] choosing the South was an attempt to take the side of the *other* even before taking the side of the self, a theoretical reaction to a characterization presented in such a negative and caricatured manner that it could not be true."

31. This is not Cassano's neologism.

Chapter 4

1. It is well known that in the fourth millennium BCE, in Mesopotamia, musicians and singers occupied a privileged role in ritual ceremonies and that, alone among the various functionaries of the kingdom, they were allowed to sit as equals with the Sumerian kings (Cavallini 34–36). But on the central role of orality in the Mediterraenean, see also Chapter 6 of this book.

2. For a more detailed analysis of the role of Delos in pre-Hellenic mythology and ritual, see Salvatore, *Isole sonanti.*

3. Paolo Scarnecchia suggests as much in *Musica popolare e musica colta* (37–38). See also the chapter of Cavallini's work on the growth of Arab culture throughout the Mediterranean during the conquests of the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphates and on the development of counterpoint and polyphony in *al-Andalus* that might have influenced similar developments in European culture of the late Middle Ages (83–121).

4. Salvatore, in *Isole sonanti*, also ties popular music and dance to archetypal structures that have been present in the Mediterranean basin for millennia.

5. While not focused on the more recent forms of musical cross-pollination, Scarnecchia's *Musica popolare e musica colta* offers a helpful overview of different musical traditions in the Mediterranean and their reciprocal influences on each other.

6. De André claimed that because his album had preceded Paul Simon's *Graceland* by two years, he had anticipated the "world music" phenomenon that began to assert itself in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

7. Demetrio Stratos, a Greek composer, musician, and songwriter, was born in Alexandria, Egypt, where he spent the first years of his life, before moving to Cyprus (where he became a naturalized citizen) and eventually Italy. Known for his experimental work on vocal instrumentation, he founded in 1972 the group Area, which became known in Italy for its fusion music that brought together sounds from a variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds. After leaving Area in 1978, he moved to New York, where he first worked with John Cage and then collaborated with Merce Cunningham, Jasper Johns, Andy Warhol, and Cage himself on the dance piece "Event." He died in 1979. Teresa De Sio, with Eugenio Bennato, who we will discuss later, is one of the founders of the folk group Musicanova, which explored and rediscovered traditional instrumentation and songs of the Neapolitan tradition. After the dissolution of Musicanova, she embarked in a career as a soloist, focusing first on the Neapolitan dialect and then, with the collaboration of Brian Eno, on broader musical experimentation in support of more socially conscious lyrics. Mauro Pagani began his musical career as a polyinstrumental musician. He joined the band I Quelli in 1970 and contributed to its transformation into Premiata Forneria Marconi (PFM), a blues and rock Italian band that was known for its daring experimentalism. After leaving PFM, he began a career as a soloist, bent on even greater experimentalism. Just before Demetrio Stratos's death, the two collaborated with other musicians in creating the band Carnascialia, which was bent on recapturing musical sounds from central and southern Italy and the Mediterranean in general. Additionally, songwriters like Eugenio Bennato, whom we discuss later, had already begun working toward traditional and dialectal songwriting. Both Bennato and Teresa De Sio, while acknowledging the importance of De André and Pagani's work,

have suggested that their initial explorations predate the release of *Créuza de mä* (see Molteni 100–107).

8. This attention to the poor and the dispossessed continued throughout De André's life, often hand in hand with serious critiques of the Italian political and intellectual establishment. De André was one of the first songwriters to embrace the fate of marginalized populations, such as transvestites, immigrants, and especially the Rom population, which was being vilified in the early 1990s during the early waves of illegal immigration into Italy. His album *Anime salve* (1996) is witness to this commitment (Viva 223–227) and explains his interest in musical phenomena that were on the margins of prevalent musical trends.

9. The Sabir was the Mediterranean's *lingua franca*, a pidgin used in everyday life and commercial exchange but that remains little studied even though it has been documented from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries. The recent study by Guido Cifoletti, *La lingua franca mediterranea*, on the *Dictionnaire de la Langue franque ou Petit Mauresque* (1830) indicated that it was spoken in all the ports of the Maghreb and the Christian lands of the Mediterranean, such as Venice and Genoa, but also Constantinople and Cairo.

10. The history of the Genoese dialect (and of Genoa's maritime ventures in the Mediterranean) is more complex than the one suggested by De André in explaining its relationship to Arabic. While Arabic influences are certainly at play in the dialect, so are those of other languages from the Mediterranean region, such as Spanish, French, and Byzantine Greek. In addition, it has in common with Portuguese consonant and vocalic sounds not found in Italian or other traditional dialects from the peninsula. For a summary of the history of Genoese, see "Zeneize."

11. We are indebted to Plastino for the historical background he offers in discussing the creation of *Créuza de mä* and for some introductory ideas he provides about the influence and meaning of De André's seminal work.

12. Information on the use of Arab in redacting Genoese mercantile documents was retrieved from "Gli arabi e la val Polcevera nel medioevo."

13. See also Pestalozza 175–176.

14. See Agnes.

15. In the following years, it was hailed by musicians like David Byrne of Talking Heads and Robert Fripp of King Crimson as one of the most important recordings of the late twentieth century.

16. As already mentioned, all the lyrics are in Genoese. Here and elsewhere, the translations are our own, since no English translations are available.

17. For an account of the growth of Genoese banking in the Middle Ages, see Lopez esp. 11–23. Particularly interesting is Lopez's discussion of the rise and fall of Guglielmo Leccacorvo and his "corporation."

18. The opening and closing frames of the song suggest that De André might have consciously worked on this juxtaposition. Indeed, the song opens and closes with the sounds of the Genoese public market playing off the opening musical track of a *gaida*, a bagpipe-like instrument played in Thrace, the region bordering the Bosphorus (current Istanbul strait), where Genoese sailors and merchants had important colonies and trade posts. Another song in the collection focuses on a traditional Genoese figure, the *pittima*, privately hired debt collectors who extorted money from borrowers through a variety of legal and illegal means, possibly highlighting the failures of a system based on speculation, risk, and imbalances in power within the social structure.

19. As De André explains, "Sidon was a very cradle of civilization. If the Phoenicians had not existed, we would have not known everything that was happening in the rest of the world, which was the Mediterranean basin. That's where they created glass, not Venice. When they burnt Sidon, it really pissed me off" (cited in Molteni 38).

20. Sidon was considered crucial to Israel's invasion, since its government claimed that in its proximity the Palestinian Liberation Organization was training over two thousand foreign nationals as terrorists for the organization.

21. For more information about the story of Scipione Cicala, see Marcello Mento, "Coraggioso" and "Fino alla morte."

22. For the ties between prostitution and port life in the Mediterranean, see Rossignoli's "Corinto, Afrodite e il commercio dei profumi" (195–198), about the role of "sacred" prostitution in Greek and Phoenician ports; and Fuhrmann's "Down and Out on the Quays of Izmir," describing the role that brothels had in Ottoman ports to Europeanize their populations.

23. See also the work of Molteni and Amodio, who, in citing Mauro Pagani himself, reveal that De André and Pagani were aware that they were bending the instrumentations to "Western harmonic and melodic needs": "By tuning this instrument [*bouzuki*] in such a fashion, we were able to make [. . .] the harmonies, the sounds, the chords [. . .] achieve a Western flavor" (19). See also Viva 190–191.

24. Pagani himself was aware of this, as he pointed out in subsequent years: "The album's music is inspired by sounds from the Mediterranean basin, but [. . .] it is not based in tradition. CRÊUZA DE MÄ [is] a music created out of nothing [. . .] It is a record that reminds us of the Mediterranean, but is not played by any Mediterranean musician. It was us, a group of Italians, who invented a sound based on what we knew: it isn't a documentary, it is a period piece. It is a contaminated project: we mixed the solid base of a European record (base, drums and keyboards) with Mediterranean instruments" (cited in Molteni 24).

25. Ruoppolo cites Battiato himself as saying that he wished to achieve a "virtual Orient" in this album by emphasizing a riff of electric guitar and violin over the sounds of percussion instruments and by using his own voice in a falsetto that mimicked the rhythmic patterns of Middle Eastern cantillation.

26. Marco Ranaldi thus describes the involution of Neapolitan music before the innovations of the 1970s: "Neapolitan song, the traditional one known everywhere and by everyone, has long focused on the voices and smells of Naples. The heavy emphasis on melody, the stylistic decadence into trite songs almost reduces to nothing this at times desperate, at times mellifluous singing" (17).

27. Despite Fascism's official condemnation of jazz as a syncopated music that had nothing to do with Italian "classical" sounds, it was wildly successful among the younger generations during the fascist era. For this paradoxical relationship, see Cherchiari's *Jazz e fascismo* and Mazzoletti's *Il Jazz in Italia: dalle origini alle grandi orchestre*.

28. Indeed, one among the most famous *tammurriata* songs, "Tammuriata nera," originated in the post–World War II years, when Neapolitan women gave birth to mixed-race children conceived through relationships with African American soldiers stationed in Naples. The song focuses on the (racist) surprise that a child of color could be conceived by an Italian (white) woman ("Something incredible has happened. / A black, black child was born / And his mother is going to call him Ciro. / Yessiree, she will call him Ciro. / But [. . .] you can

call him Ciccio or Antonio, Peppe or Ciro. / Yet that boy will still be black, black / black, black [. . .]") but also highlights the event's commonplaceness, as exposed by the female chorus ("The women say [. . .] 'This is not a rarity / There are thousands of these [children] / At times all that's needed is one look / and there you have it: / a woman is now pregnant!'"). As an aside, James (Gaetano) Senese, one of Naples's most respected jazz/blues musicians and oft collaborator of Pino Daniele, is the offspring of a Neapolitan woman (Anna Senese) and an African American soldier (James Smith), the living embodiment of the story's truthfulness and a metaphor for the quasi-biological infusion of American rhythms into Neapolitan music.

29. A comprehensive, albeit dated, analysis of foreign immigration in Naples is de Filippo and Spano's "La presenza straniera a Napoli." More recent information about the migratory fluxes toward Naples and Campania is provided by D'Angelo and Fasciglione. The Catholic relief organization Caritas/Migrantes has published more specific information about African immigration into Italy in the book *Africa-Italia. Scenari migratori* (2010).

30. Besides Pino Daniele and his friend and mentor James Senese, artists and bands associated with this rebirth and transformation of Neapolitan music include Enzo Avitabile, Tullio De Piscopo, Enzo Granianiello, Mario Musella, Napoli Centrale, Showman, Alan Sorrenti, and, later, Antonio Onorato.

31. In this regard, Daniele is also tying his song to the popular insurrections against the Spanish domination, as we have already seen in Chapter 2.

32. The Italian term has a double-edged connotation. On the one hand, it means "music player" in the sense of someone who goes around and plays often and with a variety of people. On the other, it has a pejorative meaning of "second-rate musician." Daniele's choice seems to suggest the former in his choice of collaborators but might also be an ironic barb at those who accused him of having lost his way prior to the release of this album.

33. Gato Barbieri is one of the most accomplished saxophone players in the world. His music, though heavily influenced by American jazz (Barbieri has often lived in the United States and Italy), shows the influence of Brazilian and Amerindian music as well.

34. In Chapter 2 we mentioned that *Leghismo* and its party, the *Lega Nord* (Northern League), represent an Italian extremism that advocates the separation of Italy into three federal states (Padania-North, Etruria-Centre, and Terronia-South). Its policies are based on economic and geographical racism. In addition to this "internal" racism, the Northern League has in recent years advocated stringent, xenophobic anti-immigration policies, often aimed at Muslim immigrants (the Bossi-Fini law of 2002) and organized "citizen" squads with the aim of harassing and turning in illegal immigrants for deportation. For additional information, see Avanza.

35. When Denny Mendez was elected Miss Italy and chosen to represent the country at the Miss Universe contest, a number of Italian politicians and journalists inveighed against the fact that someone whose skin color was not white could embody the true cultural values and traditions of Italy.

36. 99 Posse is an interesting band within the context of marginalized musical experiences. The group, whose composition varied and whose musical existence is marked by collaborations with groups like Almamegretta itself and Bisca, emerged from the experience of the anarchic Centri Sociali in Naples that occupied vacant buildings in an attempt to sensitize the government to prob-

lems of youth unemployment and *precariato* ("temporary employment"). After disbanding in January 2002, the members have recently reunited. Their music, while fundamentally based in reggae, uses the rap technique of superimposition and citation as the basis for many of their songs.

37. We are referring to Roland Robertson's use of the term "glocalization" to describe the process by which globalization is always, in some way, adapted to local communities and transformed by its encounter with them. See his famous article "Glocalization: Time-Space and Homogeneity-Heterogeneity."

38. Eugenio Bennato's brother, Edoardo, is a famous rock and roller whose fame for a long time obscured Eugenio's own. In recent times, Edoardo himself has begun to question Western globalization in his work, as attested by the album *L'uomo occidentale* (*Western Man*). As for their musical training, in a recent interview, Eugenio explained that he played the harmonica early in his life and that his teacher would take him and his brothers to Calabria during the summers to enmesh them in the sounds and rhythms of the region. These early experiences were decisive in instilling a love for traditional music in the young songwriter (Aprile).

39. Musicians in the *Nuova Compagnia di Canto Popolare* (including Bennato, Carlo D'Angiò, Roberto De Simone, and Giovanni Mauriello) were focused on a philological and ethnomusicologist rediscovery of traditional songs from the southern regions of Italy—Campania in particular. As such, they rediscovered, arranged, and recorded a number of songs from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in their first collaborative albums. Their songs are often instrumental, with a predilection for string and wind instruments over percussion.

40. The introduction of a heavier percussion presence borrowed from local and regional dances signals a shift toward more marginalized musical practices that were generally ostracized by mainstream channels—especially religious ones— for whom dance represents a problematic connection with pagan contents. We will discuss this in more detail when talking about Bennato's rediscovery of the *taranta* as a means of musical expression.

41. It is impossible here to discuss the phenomenon of *brigantaggio* (or "brigand-age") in its details. For more information, see Agnoli's *Dossier Brigantaggio*; and the excellent book by Ottavio Rossani, *Stato società e briganti nel Risorgimento italiano*.

42. We are referring here to *The Invention of Tradition*, where the authors describe how much of a cultural tradition, in this case English, is usually created *post-facto* as a way to justify one's cultural assumptions and beliefs (Hobsbawm and Ranger).

43. We should point out that Bennato does not devote his musical talents exclusively to the preservation and rediscovery of popular music. Among his many projects during these years are the composition of theater and ballet pieces, movie and television soundtracks, and CDs that are devoted to more mainstream projects, such as the albums *Le città di mare* (1989) and *Mille e una notte fa* (1997), though both evince the beginnings of a thematic push toward the Mediterranean.

44. The organization maintains a website at www.tarantapower.it. The extent to which the *taranta* has become a cultural phenomenon is attested by the number of festivals, concerts, and CDs that are produced annually in this field. Among the concerts, the most famous is the *Festival della Taranta*, which takes place every August in Melpignano as the culmination of smaller festivals that

occur throughout the summer in Apulia. The festival has now reached its thir-teenth edition, and it has witnessed the participation of the musical dance's most important interpreters as well as famous artists like David Van de Sfroos and Stewart Copeland.

45. In Chapter 2, see De Martino's ethnological understanding of *taranta* rituals as a positive expression of southern resistance. Also, in Chapter 5, see more about it in our discussion of Edoardo Winspeare's film *Pizzicata*.

46. This emphasis on the crossover between *taranta* and other musical forms has taken the name of *Neo-Tarantismo*, defined as "a neologism coined by observ-ing a phenomenon that involves large swaths of people across the whole of Italy (and beyond). A movement that reveals the need for 'other' music, for new types of communication and relationships; a request for a cathartic dance avail-able beyond its historical connotations [. . .] Against globalization, the flat-tening of culture and the attempts by the mass media to erase diversity comes a strong answer from below" ("Tarantismo Neotarantismo").

47. Since the *taranta* originates in areas that were once part of Magna Graecia, the dance has been clearly tied to the orgiastic peasant rites associated with the respective myths of Dionysus and the Bacchae. Others have tied the original *taranta* to the myth of the girl Arakne, whose lover drowned just when he was about to be reunited with her. At his death, the pain was so great that the girl lost her mind. Zeus, feeling pity for her plight, transformed her into a tarantula to exact revenge in perpetuity for the suffering this separation had caused her (Zazzaroni 170). Also see De Giorgi.

48. Within the framework we have provided repeatedly in this work, we should also mention David Abulafia's distinction between what he calls the "classical" Mediterranean (the one circumscribed by history to the basin enclosed between the Strait of Gibraltar, the Suez Canal, and the Bosphorus) and the other Medi-terraneans (the Caribbean, the Baltic Sea, and so on), which he calls "seas in the middle." For Abulafia, this distinction of being "in the middle" of neighboring lands confers upon them similar psychosocial characteristics ("Mediterranean-ness"), just as they did in Cassano's discussion of global Souths in Chapter 3.

49. We will explain the fraught relationship between the Italian government and immigration in Chapter 7. Here, it suffices to say that the Bossi-Fini law allowed for the immediate detention and expulsion of clandestine immigrants. Those immigrants found without identification documents also could be detained in the Centers for Temporary Permanence until their identities were verified. Moreover, the law declared that only immigrants who could prove verifiable employment would be granted visas and that identification of immigrants that could be granted asylum for humanitarian reasons could only happen before they arrived on Italian soil.

50. The orchestra is currently in its tenth year of existence. Its performances have been lauded critically, and its recordings have sold millions of copies world-wide. In the process, they have expanded their repertoire to include classical opera and traditional Western music, still rendered, however, with the partici-pation of instruments and rhythms outside those traditionally associated with Western music.

51. Ferrente thus explains this concept: "These musicians are not immigrants any-more, they are citizens of the world [. . .] The songs that they now compose go well beyond ethnic and national aspects [. . .] What emerges when the song proposed by an Indian musician is played by a Cuban trumpeter and rescored

by an Italian composer with twenty years of experience and a gift for orchestration is a new culture [. . .] We take the best from each culture without barriers, shunning purity" (Clò 217).

Chapter 5

1. For an overview of neorealism, see Micciché. However, the idea that symbolism and mythological structures are not present in so-called neorealist films and directors has been refuted. See Angela Dalle Vacche's analysis of Rosselini's and De Sica's work in *The Body in the Mirror*.

2. To complicate the representation, Rossellini has Karin meet older Strombolian men who, having worked in the Americas, have returned to Stromboli because, as they repeat to her, the Americas are for the younger generations, while the older generations still have a connection to their native land. While this rejection of life in the Americas hints at the value that previous generations still place on a southern way of life, it also indicates the inability of these older island men to find a middle ground and dialogue between the two modes of existence. The movie's conclusion—where Karin invokes God's mercy and watchful eye to help her deal with her personal *via crucis* on the island and returns to her husband to raise her child traditionally—also suggests that only through external, divine intervention can a northerner endure this retrograde lifestyle.

3. The husband, displaying traditional northern views, at one point claims that he wants to return to England to work because Naples and its people encourage laziness and indolence in those who visit, a standard depiction of southern life in Grand Tour visitors. Conversely, the wife is more prone to embrace the locals and their environment, because, as she suggests in stereotypical fashion, they are closer to passionate and emotional responses than is her phlegmatic husband.

4. More recent movies that rely on humor to represent southern culture are Roberto Benigni's *Johnny Stecchino* (1991); Davide Ferrario's *Figli di Annibale* (1998); Rocco Papaleo's *Basilicata Coast to Coast* (2010); Gabriele Salvatores's *Marrakech Express* (1989) and *Puerto Escondido* (1992); Roberta Torre's *Tano da Morire* (1997); and, again, Lina Wermüller's *Io speriamo che me la cavo*, or the English version, *Ciao, Professore* (1992).

5. This strand, which tangentially touches on the work of Garrone and Ciprì and Maresco, has continued to be strongly represented into the present. Directors like Pasquale Squitieri (*Camorra*, 1972; *Corleone*, 1978), Ricky Tognazzi (*La scorta*, 1993), Marco Tullio Giordana (*I cento passi*, 2000), Pasquale Scimeca (*Placido Rizzotto*, 2000), Marco Amenta (*Il fantasma di Corleone*, 2005; *La siciliana ribelle*, 2008) Marco Risi (*L'ultimo padrino*, 2008; *Fortàpasc*, 2009; but also *Mery per sempre*, 1989, about the relationship between a teacher and petty criminals in Palermo); and many others have continued to shine a light on the dealings of organized crime and their connections, and collusion, with the Italian state.

6. Italy's first republican period goes from 1946, when Italians voted for Italy to become a republic and ousted the monarchs, until 1994, when the scandals of *Tangentopoli* ("bribe city") led to the dissolution of traditional parties and the birth of many new ones and to reforms of the political system that were meant, at least in theory, to rid Italian politics of nepotism and cronyism.

7. Admittedly, Giuseppe Tornatore's opus offers broader perspectives on the South, though early movies like *Stanno tutti bene* (1990), *L'uomo delle stelle* (1995), and *Malena* (2000) also are heavily imbued with nostalgia. More complex is *Baarìa* (2009); a replaying of life in the Sicilian town of Bagheria (where the director was born) through the upheavals of the past fifty years of history, it problematizes previous nostalgic memories within the complex gamut of cultural, political, and social events that have traversed Sicilian life over this time span.

8. Salvatores's film completely overlooks historical evidence that Italian occupying forces in the Mediterranean and especially in Greece and its islands (the site of the events in the film) were anything but peaceful. For more information on the violence of Italian occupation in Greece during World War II, see Conti; and Santarelli. A more accurate representation of southern life by Salvatores is *Sud* (1993), about the holdout staged by three men (one of them a migrant worker) to protest the injustices perpetrated against them by traditional authorities and powers of a southern town.

9. While it is impossible to say how many and which moviemakers and directors benefited from this largesse, the number of directors that have produced films *from* and *about* the South in recent years is astounding. Among those films we might mention are Alessandro Piva's *LaCapaGira* (2000) and *Mio Cognato* (2006), sadly ironic representations of the collusion between small-time criminals and an organization like the *Sacra Corona Unita*, the Apulian equivalent of the Mafia, in Bari; Sergio Rubini's explorations of Apulian towns and their inhabitants' dreams in both movies that precede this impetus (*La stazione*, 1990; *Tutto l'amore che c'è*, 1999), and more recent ones, like *L'amore ritorna* (2004) and *La terra* (2006); and the already mentioned Roberta Torre's *Angela* (2002), which offers a different representation of the Sicilian Mafia, and *I baci mai dati* (2011), a fictional revisiting of the phenomenon of visionary *santone* (holy women) in southern society. But also see movies by Giada Colagrande (*Aprimi il cuore*, 2002), Paolo Virzì (*My Name is Tanino*, 2002), and Vincenzo Marra (*Vento di terra*, 2004).

10. With regard to the decay of ethical and informational value of Italian mass media, see Leporcaro.

11. Giovanni Falcone and Paolo Borsellino were Sicilian magistrates who achieved significant success in tracking the movement of money that documented the Mafia's illegal activities. Having begun to piece together evidence that tied the Mafia to secret informants within the government, they were eliminated on orders by Mafia boss Salvatore "Totò" Riina. See also our discussion of Consolo in Chapter 6.

12. In Florence, explosives placed inside a car were detonated near the famed, historic Torre dei Pulci, killing five people and causing serious damage to the Uffizi Galleri itself. Two month later, in Rome, similar bombs exploded at San Giovanni in Laterano and San Giorgio al Velabro, causing damage but no further loss of life. They were part of an attempt by Totò Riina, head of the Corleonesi clan, to weaken and destabilize the state.

13. As we have seen in the chapter on music (Chapter 4), American jazz, with its improvisational and mixed origins, easily allows for the disruption of traditional western patterns. For Ciprì and Maresco, jazz has become also a way of doing cinema, as its improvisational nature well fits the episodic and spontaneous nature of their work. As Maresco affirmed in an interview by Emiliano

Morreale, describing their movie *Il ritorno di Cagliostro*, "Truly, there wasn't a real screenplay [. . .] And here one can see our almost inevitable tendency to improvise, whenever possible: the idea of 'jazz' cinema. In reality, our improvisations aren't many, and they are mainly in the dialogues, because we like to keep alive our language; thus, at times, we like to find expressions and specific characters from Palermo, because the movie is partially rendered in dialect" (cited in Morreale 38).

14. We should point out that another characteristic of Ciprì and Maresco's cinema is that all roles, including those of women, are played by men, often as incongruously as possible, as in the role of the prostitute in *Totò che visse due volte*. This detail, at a time when the emergence of *veline* and *letterine* in Italian television shows reduces women to fetishistic, exploitable bodies voided of content, has the quality of ironically highlighting and criticizing the media's omnivorous desire for surface beauty at the expense of content and depth.

15. While beyond the purview of this chapter, the contrast between the detritus of ruins exposed by Ciprì and Maresco's camera work and their equally astonishing embracing of the gigantic quality of the Sicilian landscape (in which human beings are diminished to become ant-like characters in a geography that reduces their illusions of grandeur) is ever present in their work. For a more detailed analysis see Roberti esp. 108–111.

16. "Cinema today is television, it has lost its linguistic autonomy and it copies another language, it has lost its ability to invent a world, with its own language. Cinema is television, thirty channels of continuous images wherein the movie disappears" (Maresco cited in Morreale 43).

17. The same actor who plays the two parts also played the part of the uncle in *Lo zio di Brooklyn*, thus maintaining a continuity with the previous movie that is also emphasized in the opening sequence, as we watch spectators in a movie theater watching, and being disgusted by, scenes from *Lo zio di Brooklyn* itself.

18. Upon release, the film was censored for indecency and immorality as well as blasphemy. The directors were eventually exonerated in court and allowed to show the movie in its entirety.

19. The movie, the first one filmed by Ciprì and Maresco at least partially in Technicolor, details the fake rediscovery of a lost movie by the now-deceased Trinacria Cinematografica. Through news shorts, interviews, and flashbacks in time, Ciprì and Maresco recount the history not only of Trinacria productions but also of the cinema industry in Sicily, all the while depicting a world where fiction and fact mix, corrupting each other and the people who work in this world.

20. Ciprì and Maresco shoot all their movies in black and white, with at times grainy film, in a nod to neorealism. But while in neorealism black and white film had a distancing effect of attempting to document the events narrated, in the Sicilian directors' films, it works with the extended duration of the shots, as well as their exceedingly posed quality, to concentrate the viewers' attention on the human subjects framed by the camera. Freed of distractions, the viewer can thus focus on the despoiled ugliness that has been wrought on humans and landscape by the modernity whose margins they inhabit, frequently being moved to empathy and moral sympathy with the plight of the marginalized other.

21. Amelio had originally intended for the young boy to take Antonio's gun and shoot him as he slept, an ending that more cynically represents the loss of

hope and meaning in the child's (and the viewers') worldview. By choosing this alternate ending, Amelio leaves this negative reading possible but allows for the glimmer of hope that the boy and the girl, having reestablished sibling bonds that have been frayed by their previous experiences, might emerge from the experience of the orphanage more positively.

22. This cinematic sequence, which is also explained in the conversation at the dinner table between Antonio, his sister and husband, and another couple refers to the practice that people have, not only in the South, but most obviously visible on its coast, of illegally starting construction on vacation homes and expansions without the necessary permits. When the state intervenes, the construction stops temporarily or at least until the next payola or *condono edilizio* (a "building amnesty" for those who have not followed local building regulations) allows the work to continue to its completion. This has led to the sad spectacle, most clearly visible from trains and the coastal highways, of half-completed buildings dotting the coastal cliffs, a reminder of the corruption reigning in Italian politics, north and south. Amelio points out this paradox when he says, "I know that the South is not so just because there is a North, but it is South because there is also a corrupt South. This subject matter might be uncomfortable, but it needs to be confronted. The corrupt South is the greatest misfortune of all the Souths of the world: it is even more terrible to be near one of your brothers who needs you and you don't do a thing to help him come out of it" (Amelio, *Amelio* 43).

23. The definition, which translates as "mudslinging factory," has been used by journalist Roberto Saviano, whose book *Gomorra* we discuss later in the chapter. Saviano coined the term in reference to the denigration by biased, partisan media of magistrates, journalists, and other public figures who expose corrupt aspects of Italian society. Usually the denigration turns the accusations against the whistle-blowers, suggesting ulterior motives for their exposés. The most striking example adduced by Saviano was the media attacks against magistrate Giovanni Falcone, accused of implying that the Mafia had high government connections so he could advance his own agenda and career (even after Falcone was killed by the Mafia for discovering its collusion with government officials).

24. This invasion was highlighted by the arrival of the Albanian ship Vlora in the port of Bari in 1991 carrying 15,000 people. See Chapter 7 for a discussion of this episode within the context of post–Cold War transmigration.

25. See Amelio's own commentary on this aspect of his movie:

> I chose a country like Albania because I believe Albania today is like Italy used to be [. . .] I have to explain the presence of Italian television in Albania. Until the death of the dictator, Enver Hoxha, Albania was completely cut off from the rest of the world. They couldn't even listen to the radio. After Hoxha died in 1985 his successor extended some liberties to the people, including making it possible to see TV broadcasts from nearby countries such as Italy, which is seventy miles from Albania. Although Italy is very close to Albania geographically, in terms of their cultures the two nations are as far apart as Italy was from the United States fifty years ago. (cited in Crowdus and Georgakas 198)

26. Rodica Diaconescu points out that in doing so, Amelio follows the path of Pier Paolo Pasolini, who, in the *Scritti corsari*, had accused America, American-style neocapitalism, and its media of fabricating false materialist expectations in

the Italian public, perverting its social imaginary and accelerating its "cultural genocide." In *Lamerica*, Italy's television exports these genocidal tendencies "beyond its state-given borders." Diaconescu also suggests that by privileging the position of the Italians in the movies, Amelio risks relegating the experience of the Albanians to a subaltern, Eurocentric vision. In her view, he avoids doing so by repositioning Gino and Michele as historical subjects that are both colonizers and colonized, conquerors and conquered, emigrants and (failed) masters (168–170). See also Lombardi.

27. "This is the prefact to *Stolen Children*. It is as though I had first told the ending, and the point of departure came next, seeking the heart of Italy herself, but with a consciousness that there is no clear-cut boundary separating good from evil, that it isn't enough to eradicate the bad so that the course of life may get back to being calm" (Amelio, "Birth" 19).

28. "I too insisted on respecting these secrets, not disclosing, for instance what happened between the two brothers after the crime. I don't know whether it was Giovanni who said to Pietro: Assume my guilt. Or if it was Pietro who said: I'll be the one to take and hold the knife" (Amelio, "Birth" 19).

29. We must point out, however, that Amelio, as opposed to directors like Salvatores and Tornatore, does not imbue his movies with nostalgia for the better times in the past. The past he depicts is always complex—suffering and strife are balanced with a realization that the events depicted are often the only way to a better future—when discussing the migration both of southerners to the North and, on a larger scale, of Italians to the Americas and Albanians to Italy.

30. The term *pieds-noirs* ("black feet") served to designate French citizens living in Algeria and other French colonies, even if their origins were not originally in France. Many of these French citizens were second- or third-generation Algerian-born and often had few connections with the French mainland.

31. Garrone understands the temptation to idealize the Italian seashore as Tornatore and Salvatores often do. By juxtaposing this view to the illegally built apartment complexes overlooking the beach, he divests this aspect of Italy's cinematic imaginary of its nostalgic content to increase its complexity.

32. Garrone's latest movie, *Reality*, continues the director's analysis of the complex relationship between globalization and Italian culture, as it depicts the world of reality-television shows and the extremes to which a Neapolitan fishmonger goes to participate and succeed in its superficial interstices.

33. For detailed analyses of how Garrone and his fellow scriptwriters (which included the book's author) condensed and extrapolated the stories they made central to the movie, as well as their motives for doing so, see Crispino; and De Sanctis.

34. See n23.

35. The first, *San Paolo e la tarantola* (1990), was, as Winspeare himself admits, a youthful work spawned by his interest in the *taranta* but without any knowledge of the work of De Martino and others (Nacci). See also Winspeare's self-deprecating commentary about his ignorance of the *taranta* tradition in his "Alla ricerca della taranta perduta." *La festa che prende fuoco* (2008) describes the controversy surrounding the feast of Saint Anthony Abbot in Novoli. In 2010, Winspeare released his most interesting documentary to date, *Sotto il Celio azzurro*, a movie filmed in Rome that explores the struggles experienced by a group of teachers dedicated to continuing to provide multicultural instruc-

tion to a new generation of Italian preschoolers—and their parents—as the city and the country itself deal with the racial and ethnic diversity spawned by the immigration waves of the last thirty years into Italy.

36. See Chapter 3.

37. There are different legends about the role that Saint Paul played in the healing of the *tarantati*. One tradition says that a local Christian housed Saint Paul in Galatina when the latter arrived on mainland Italy. The man's house had a well whose water cured people from the venomous bites of snakes and other poisonous animals. Saint Paul thus blessed the feud of Galatina and granted it immunity from the effects of the serum of snakes and other animals, especially tarantulas. As a result, every year the *tarantati* would come to the town in search of a cure. The cure consisted of performing the ritual dances and drinking so much water from the well that they would eventually vomit into it. This would provoke the snakes (who resided in the water) to anger and then try to grab the *tarantati*. In response, the well was shut over the animals and the cure was considered completed. (The cured patients would then place the money that was collected during the various ritual dances on their behalf in a depository in the basilica.) The well was closed in 1959 after its water source was declared unsanitary by the local authorities. Variations on this story are told in Ernesto De Martino's seminal work *The Land of Remorse* (22–23, 70–71). In the context of our book and its interest in the liquidity of cultural exchanges proffered by the Mediterranean to those who inhabit its shores, *tarantismo* is already imbued with contaminations and grafts from a variety of traditions. For one, the legend itself has Saint Paul, a Jew from the Near East, traveling to southern Italy, where Greek myth and traditions predominate (the dance of the *tarantati* evokes Dionysian rituals, for example), and subsuming an agrarian ceremony (the exorcism tied to the bite of the tarantula) under a Christian umbrella.

38. We disagree with La Penna when she claims that *Pizzicata* reveals a "neo-traditionalist stance [that] nostalgically seems to suggest that there is an unrecoverable gap between a not so distant past, now of mythical proportions, and a present ruled by a different morality and set of values" (192). From our conversations with Winspeare, it is clear that he does not interpret this tradition nostalgically but rather represents both the values of a tradition that is being lost and the limits of that self-same tradition, which he does not endorse but exposes for the viewers to evaluate on their own terms. The film does not suggest moral valuations of its characters but rather offers itself as a recording and reordering for contemporary audiences of a tradition that has been gradually lost and confused by the passage of time (Ferme, "Interview").

39. Winspeare underscores this intent in an article he wrote in 1993 ("Il tempo della festa") before the completion of the movie.

40. Winspeare expressed this potential in an interview with Virginia Peluso: "I understood [. . .] that by dancing I was freeing myself of many superstructures, of a too formal education. It was a way to feel the beat of the Salento, which is the beat of the tambourine. Dancing I discovered a lot about myself [. . .] I believe that drums are the first instrument created by mankind. Allowing myself to be carried by its sound, I returned to my roots. But they weren't only my roots; it was like going back to the Greeks, to the Messapi, to the civilization of the Menhir [. . .] The rhythm liberates you. The *pizzica* opens you up" (46–47).

41. Probo and Zimba both played in the band *Officina Zoè*, a group of musicians from the Salento brought together by Winspeare who became one of the best known *pizzica* bands in the region and the band that performs most of the movie's soundtrack. Another member of the group, Cinzia Marzo, who writes many of the group's songs, has a part in the movie as Teresa, the lead singer of Zimba's group and ex-girlfriend of Donato.

42. Winspeare himself underscores this connection, as he has called his first two movies "Greek tragedies, not melodramas" (Peluso 46).

43. The music mixes together traditional *pizzica* and *tarantella* rhythms with haunting melodies borrowed from traditional songs, such as the eerily haunting "Mamma luna," sung a cappella by Teresa the night the group performs during the patron saint's festivities. Winspeare also avails himself of the music of Sud Sound System, the Salento group we discussed in Chapter 4.

44. Once the largest steelwork complex in Europe, Ilva was a government-owned company that produced steel at advantageous prices, selling them below cost throughout Europe. Because the government had an interest in production continuing despite environmental regulations, it was not subject to the controls on emissions that regulated private companies, so even today it still emits 8.8 percent of the total dioxin produced in Europe. In the 1990s, it was practically gifted to an Italian industrialist, Luigi Riva, who, applying the principles of the private sector to an already deregulated industry, continued the noxious policies of the Italian government, making the contrast between the benefits to the company and the damage to the local population even more dramatic. Studies have shown that in the last twenty years, neighborhoods close to the factory have higher incidences of cancer mortality than anywhere in Italy.

45. Elsewhere, Winspeare is more specific in elaborating these contrasts: "Taranto is perfect because it is both scary, as it houses the largest steelworks in Europe, and delightful, in that the old Spartan colonizers chose the most beautiful location in Magna Grecia. It's the ideal place for a 'miracle' and I believe that if any great man from the past should come back to earth, it would be on the shores of the Mar Piccolo" ("*Un miracolo*" 236–237).

46. The character in the movie is played by a child actor by the same name. As in his previous movies, Winspeare often chooses to give his actors' given names to his characters, a choice that suggests both an attempt to portray reality as is and the desire to stress the nonprofessional nature of their acting ventures (see Casello, "Recensione").

47. The boss's references are not casual. By directly mentioning the Sicilians, the Neapolitans, and the Calabrians, he locates the geographical and ethnic origin of the three main crime organizations historically operating in Italy: the Sicilian Mafia, the Neapolitan Camorra, and the Calabrian 'Ndrangheta. Each of these organizations has established a national network of criminality that has functioned as a "state-within-the-state," to the point that they have often altered political and financial decisions taken by Italy's government.

48. While it is beyond the purview of this chapter, the role of women in Winspeare's movies is significant and has yet to be fully analyzed. It suffices to say here that Winspeare sees women as representing a strong telluric presence in his portrayals of the region's traditions. They, more than men, represent the true stories and experiences of the Salento (Peluso 44).

49. Elena Past suggests in an article on *Respiro* that the water scenes allow Crialese to "undermine language as a privileged space of human interaction, proposing the world below the surface as an alternative form of communication. Navigating

underwater, in fact, becomes a form of physical, marine eloquence that functions to mend the ruptures caused by words" (59). This is a form of communication wherein the characters "interact differently. They demonstrate in part a capacity to become fish-like, forming an assemblage (as a school of fish) suspended in a moment of pure movement and supported by the lilting currents of the Mediterranean" (ibid.). In this new environment, "*Respiro's* social morality tale of ostracization opens itself instead to become a narrative of inclusion (with room for Grazia *and* her anomalies *and* her community)" (60). Our view is that island life cannot be separated from the surrounding sea; therefore the scenes in which the villagers help Pietro search for Grazia reveal that the sense of community is already present *before* the characters enter the water and the two are not opposites in Crialese's worldview.

50. In the United States, the movie was released with the title *The Golden Door*. While the translation does not render the Italian neologism, it points to the obvious monetary and economic fantasy in the protagonists' travels westward.

51. For a summary of the historical arguments against immigration of inferior people from these regions, see Lombardo. For a more extensive analysis of this period, see Kraut. Also refer to Chapter 2.

52. Crialese, who has used nonprofessional actors in his films, tailored Sara's fictional story on the story of Timnit T., the woman who plays Sara. Like her character, Timnit T. left Eritrea to seek a new life in the West. It took her over a year to reach the coast of Libya, where she embarked, with 74 countrymen, on a rubber dinghy. When the dinghy exhausted its fuel, the boat was adrift for 21 days on the sea, during which all but five people died (Timnit T. was the only woman survivor). While she was not pregnant, she witnessed the death of her pregnant friend Ester, whose body she washed before disposing it to sea (Caldarelli). When the story was reported in the news with her picture, Crialese was so stricken by the woman's gaze that he asked to meet with her and narrate her story in the movie.

53. There are countless other movies that discuss the phenomenon of immigration—both fictions and documentaries. (For a brief summary of the latter from the perspective of the migrant, see Chapter 7.) Among the many fictional renditions of the life of migrants to Italy, we can also signal Stefano Incerti's *Prima del tramonto* (1999), Carlo Mazzacurati's *Vesna va veloce* (1994), Giuseppe Tornatore's *La sconosciuta* (2006), Marco Turco's *La straniera* (2009), and Maurizio Zaccaro's *L'articolo 2* (1994). A slightly different take is the one provided in Marco Tullio Giordana's *Quando sei nato non puoi più nasconderti* (2005), where an Italian boy falls out of his father's sailboat and is rescued by a boat of immigrants navigating toward Italian shores. While initially treated like the immigrants who share his boat, the boy is eventually rescued and tries to help some of his fellow boat-mates, though in the end they betray his trust.

54. For an excellent analysis of this subgenre of Italian movies, see O'Healy.

55. We should point out that Crialese might have been aided in reversing the protagonist's perspective by viewing the documentary *Soltanto il mare* (translated in an English version as *Only the sea* [2010]) by the Ethiopian migrant filmaker Dagmawi Yimer, which was filmed on the island of Lampedusa, where Crialese owns a home. As confirmed to us by Alessandro Triulzi, who has run and organized the *Archivio Memorie Migranti* in Lampedusa and was among the founding members of *Asinitas*, the organization that trained Dagmawi Yimer as a filmmaker, Crialese was well aware of Yimer's movie (personal conversation with Triulzi in Berkeley, CA, March 9, 2013). In that film, rather than present

the migrant's view, Yimer films and interviews Lampedusa villagers and fishermen about their opinions and experiences with clandestine migrants brought to the island for processing by Italian authorities. In doing so, he reveals that the majority of islanders are much more open and well disposed toward the migrants than are the central authorities and politicians.

Chapter 6

1. Starting with Federico De Roberto (*I vicerè* [1894]) and Giovanni Verga (*I Malavoglia* [1881]) and running through Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa (*Il gattopardo* [1958]), the changes that Italy's state formation and nation building wrought on southern society engaged, albeit from different perspectives, most writers from the South. For many, the crucial moment of unification symbolizes the fall of a feudal order traversed by corruption, whether by status and moral decay (*I vicerè*; *Il gattopardo*) or by greed and despair due to the new Italian state's impositions on the local populations through taxation or enforced military service (*I Malavoglia*). The pessimism that exudes from these early works carries through the nostalgic naturalism of a lost world, as in Salvatore Quasimodo's and Leonardo Sinisgalli's poetry, but also in the description of the hopeless conditions of peasants and bandits in Corrado Alvaro's *Gente in Aspromonte* (1930). This same despair feeds instead the fire of writers coeval to Alvaro, such as Ignazio Silone and Elio Vittorini, whose most famous works (i.e., Silone's *Fontamara* [1930] and *Vino e pane* [1938]; Vittorini's *Conversazione in Sicilia* [1941]) convey symbolically rich messages of opposition to the central authority of Fascism and of the Italian state. More complex are the Souths that emerge in the theater of Eduardo De Filippo and the Sicily of Leonardo Sciascia. For the former, irony and deep-seated melancholy provide the background on which to expose the violence inflicted on Neapolitan society by endemic corruption and poverty. Sciascia's equally prolific production in essays, novels, and short stories instead spans the worlds of the Mafia, criminality, migration, and more to offer a portraiture of societal corruption that, from Sicily, seems to expand through the peninsula. *Mutatis mutandis*, however, these are works whose horizon remains confined to the national question.

2. Nigro is also the author of *Diario mediterraneo* (2001), an autobiographical work that records Nigro's physical and intellectual journey from Italy to eastern and southern Mediterranean shores from March 1990 to 2000. While this work is, at times, tainted by superficial, even essentialized, images, it has the merit of retracing the cultural history of these years, particularly as regards the work of writers. With the "fall of the liquid wall of the Adriatic" (v), Nigro argues, Italy became open to people from the Balkans, who joined an already conspicuous presence of North African and sub-Saharan immigrants. During these years, Nigro, along with other Italian authors, developed the notion that the Italian South, uneasily poised between East and West, modernity and tradition, and "imperfect Occidentalism" and "imperfect Orientalism" (ibid. 164), could become a bridge between continents. This spurred not only a "political utopia" (ibid. v) of the region as an example of resistance to the excesses of Westernization and civilizational clashes but also a host of cultural projects of which *Diario* itself is the record. Such projects included writers' associations (e.g., "Associazione degli scrittori dell'Adriatico"), editorial series, seminars (e.g., "Seminari

di Marzo in Alberobello"), conferences (e.g., in Bari, Ostuni, Beirut, Aix-en-Provence, and Marrakesh), partnerships with Mediterranean universities (e.g., CUM), journals (e.g., *In/Oltre*, *Drita*, *La luce*, *La Battana*, and *Da qui*), and even a news program in Arabic, French, Spanish, and Italian endorsed by noted writers from all Mediterranean shores (e.g., Vincenzo Consolo, Michele Prisco, Claudio Magris, and Claudio Marabini from Italy; Predrag Matvejević, Dashnor Kokonozi, Gragan Mraovich, and Dritero Agolli from the Balkans; Majid el Houssy, Tahar Ben Jelloun, Assia Djebar, and Malika Mokeddem from the Maghreb; Oran Pamouk from Turkey; Adonis, Salah Stetiè, Hemil Habibi, Avraham Yehoshua, and Amoz Oz from the Middle East; Bernard Simeone and Dominique Fernandez from France; Fernando Savater, Carmen Martin Gaite, Vicente Gonzales Martin, and Jesus Graciliano Gonzales from Spain; and Odisseus Elitis, Theo Angelopulos, and Vassili Vassilikos from Greece). As readers follow the diary's entries, it becomes clear that it records a mix of successes and failures, but the work nevertheless remains an important account that provides a sense of the intellectual ferment of these years, particularly with regard to writers that we are forced to exclude here.

3. See "Viaggio in Sicilia" where Consolo writes, "The complex and infinitely varied world that is Italy, this inextricable unity of nature and culture, of life and history [. . .] this serene and threatening nature, the harmonious beauty and devastating horror" (245–246).

4. *Il viaggio di Odisseo* has been partially translated as "Conversation between Vincenzo Consolo and Mario Nicolao" in *Reading and Writing the Mediterranean*. Here and elsewhere, we will cite from this volume, reporting the titles of existing English translations of Consolo's works. For additional discussion on the centrality of the journey in Consolo, see Lollini and O'Connell.

5. For the reference to Benjamin, see *Il viaggio* 38.

6. A few excerpts from this work are translated as "Olive and Wild Olive" and "The Ruin of Syracuse" in *Reading and Writing the Mediterranean*. We use the existing translations when they are available and indicate the original when they are not.

7. ENI stands for *Ente Nazionale Idrocarburi* (National Hydrocarbon Organization). At the time, oil companies had established an oligopoly of the so-called Seven Sisters. Mattei sought to establish equitable partnership with Middle Eastern and North African oil-producing countries and became a very controversial figure. He died in a plane crash in 1962. Initially regarded as a storm-related accident, the crash was likely caused by the explosion of a bomb placed by the Mafia.

8. The devastation of Noto is also central to the play *L'ape iblea*, a dramatic elegy or Latin *canticum* in prose and verse that laments the decay of Noto, the Baroque city rebuilt after the earthquake of 1693, which now lies in utter neglect. This neglect caused the cupola of the cathedral to fall in 1997 and now threatens Noto's survival.

9. But on the destruction of Palermo, see also "Palermo, Most Beautiful and Defeated," in Consolo, *Reading*; and "Le pietre di Pantalica."

10. On Consolo's own migration, see also the interview *Fuga dall'Etna*.

11. Other writings contain important reflections on the Mediterranean by migrants and exiles, including "Malophòros," "Un giorno come gli altri," and "Men in the Sun." In "Diary of Two Trips to America," Consolo recalls the Italian migration to the United States, while in "The Bridge over the Channel of

Sicily," he addresses the long history of Sicilian migration to Tunisia, focusing especially on the labor migrants of the nineteenth century. Similarly, in "Genova Fenicia d'Occidente," he recalls not only his own experience as a migrant but also the arrival in Milan of southern emigrants and the departure from the harbor of Genova of Italians going to the United States and Argentina. Another important reflection is contained in *Nottetempo, casa per casa* (1992), where the main character's last name, Marano, recalls the forced conversion and persecution of Jews following the Spanish Reconquista, even as he becomes, as a militant anti-Fascist, a political exile, joining masses of destitute Sicilians migrating to Tunisia.

12. For further discussion on *heroic melancholy* in sixteenth-century renaissance art as carried out by the scholars of the Warburg Institute, see Pensky.

13. On the Muslim's land reforms, see also Consolo, "Arancio."

14. In another essay, "Ibn Jubayr," Consolo retraces the journey of Jubayr, between 1183 and 1185, from Grenade to Ceuta, Alexandria, and several destinations in the Middle East before coming to Sicily, where he shipwrecked in the Strait of Messina. The Norman king William II assisted Jubayr and other Muslims in a gesture that exemplifies "a harmony of peoples, religions, cultures, and languages [. . .] an exchange between Christians, Muslims, and Jews which marked in Sicily one of the highest moments of Mediterranean civilization" ("Ibn Jubayr" 234).

15. See also Consolo's description of an earlier visit to Cefalù: "Because next to one other, and in harmony, were the Cathedral, the Fortress, Roger's castle, and the small houses of the Saracen harbor with arches, turrets and small windows, and those of Vascio and Giudecca" (Consolo, *L'olivo* 124).

16. For an excellent discussion of the poetic dimension of Consolo's prose, see D'Acunti, "Alla ricerca."

17. Abate uses the phrase *terra di mezzo* (which, as we saw, Matteo Garrone used as the title for one of his movies) to indicate the Trentino in the essay "Vivere per addizione" ("Living by Summation"), which provides the title for a book we will discuss later in this chapter. In that essay, he claims that living in Trentino showed him that his experiences did not detract one from the other or affect his worldview in a negative way, as is happening in many areas and among the people of Italy. Instead, this "land in between" has provided him with an awareness: "I want to live by summation, my friends, without having to choose between North and South, between the language of the heart and the language that feeds you, between my one and other self. I am tired of jingoistic or opportunistic answers, answers that are hypocritical and false" (Abate, *Vivere* 146).

18. According to tradition, there have been eight migrations of Albanian populations to Italy, starting in the fourteenth century and progressing to the most recent one, following the breakdown of Yugoslavia documented in movies like Gianni Amelio's *Lamerica*. The *Arbëreshë* are Christian Orthodox who left Albania during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries to establish residence in Italy. They first came as mercenary troops under the guidance of the prince Giorgio Castriota Skanderbeg to help Alfonso V and Ferrante I of Aragon deal with local rebellions. In exchange, Ferrante awarded them possession of a number of villages in Calabria and Sicily and later in Puglia. Greater numbers migrated after Skanderbeg's death. The populations of this scattered diaspora refer to their "nation" as *Arbëria* and to their language as *Arbëreshë*.

19. With regard to the identity conflict that becoming a *germanese* implies for Calabrian emigrants to the North, see Bocchinfuso, "*Mescidanza* di linguaggi." Abate considers this linguistic mixing to be vitally important for his own sense of identity. Parati has noticed, for example, that "Abate's narratives trace identities at the intersection of languages, such as standard and nonstandard Italian, German, and *Arbëreshë*, and of changing economic conditions. The economy of language acquisition and that of social mobility ground themselves in parallel hierarchical structures that Abate connects using different languages and cultural contexts" (*Migration Italy* 42).

20. The "Mericano" earned his nickname when, on a trip that only his son knows to be a fraud (i.e., he never left Italy but spent time in Genoa after his passport and money were stolen), he claimed to have visited his father's burial place in the United States.

21. "Albanian literature, recorded in written form in the nineteenth century, lived for centuries without transcription, as writing was reserved to the clergy [. . .] Even the Ottomans, when they invaded Albania in the fourteenth century, defined the Albanians as a 'people without books'" (Comberiati 221).

22. Georg Kastrioti (or Castriota) was given the name Iksender-Bey, whence derives Scanderbeg, at the Ottoman court where he was raised with his brothers as a *näzim*, a Christian warrior serving the emperor. Eventually Scanderbeg became one of the Turks' most valiant generals. He rebelled against the sultan Murad II after the Battle of Nis and assumed the title of Prince of Albania, resisting and defeating the Turks repeatedly. He also created alliances with Venice and the king of Naples. The latter aided him in his resistance against the Turks and required that Scanderbeg and his troops help him in subduing the rebellious populations first in the province of Crotone and later in Sicily and Apulia. They were rewarded with a number of hamlets in Calabria and Sicily and then the towns of Monte Sant'Angelo and San Giovanni Rotondo in the Gargano region.

23. Stefano is initially depicted as a quasi-supernatural being who appears out of nowhere to perform acts that are beyond human comprehension. Giovanni never meets him as an adult but simply receives his letters. The only evidence that he exists in the real world is the interview he gives Claudia Camardi on national television, an event that is witnessed by Giovanni's fellow citizens but not by Giovanni himself. As such, Stefano maintains an air of mystery that makes his prophetic prediction appear possible. Abate plays on this mystery by having Giovanni disappear from the narration before his thirty-sixth birthday, replicating the mysterious world of heroic deeds often tied to oral narratives.

24. Characters in Abate's works who are unable to see the positive value of this cross-pollination end up lost or deprived of significant interior life. For example, in the short stories of *Il muro dei muri*, those who reject their own origins and completely assimilate with the insider/boss/ethnic other end up depressed and suicidal. Conversely, the characters who break through a univocal cultural standard and embrace the complexity of their situation gain a positive outlook on their life and circumstances.

25. For an overview of the *'Ndrangheta*, Ruggero Barbazza's degree thesis *Le alleanze criminali-'Ndrangheta e cartelli colombiani* (available at http://www.stampoantimafioso.it/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/tesi%20finale.pdf) provides a summary of recent research in the matter. Barbazza shows that, focusing its main business on the export and distribution of cocaine, the

'Ndrangheta has evolved from an agrarian organization intent on petty extortion of local businesses to a globalized crime organization that exists on every continent, with extensive networks and business interests in many different areas worth billions of dollars. In the novel, the lawyer Arcuri points out this evolution, as he reassures Florian: "They won't waste their time going after you [. . .] They have their drug trafficking to tend [. . .] the illegal immigrants, the great public works, big companies" (196). See also Michael Day, "'Unstoppable' Spread of Calabria's 'Ndrangheta Mafia," and "Why Italy's Scariest Mob Loves Canada."

26. For the role that oral narratives and the actions of women have in tying the story to a mythical time and to the idea of *nóstos*, see also Luzi, "Spazialità e *nóstos*."

27. While the novel focuses on the storytelling from a prevalently male perspective, Abate is careful to show that this is not exclusively a male prerogative. Indeed, a key element for the passage of one's lore to the next generation is constituted by Marco's grandmother, who, on a trip to a seaside town, spends many hours singing and narrating to the boy the past of his people: "'e një i shehur, i shprishet të zëmëra, e një lotë e bukur, i pështron sytë . . .' Grandma stopped one morning and looked at me with a satisfied gaze, even though the only thing you could see was my sweaty head. She was telling the story of Hora's first refugees, of the secret nostalgia that spread in the heart, of a beautiful tear that veiled one's eyes" (*La festa del ritorno* 96). Just as compelling is the essay "Rapsodia" in *Vivere per addizione e altri viaggi*, where Abate narrates the purchase of his first recording device to record his grandmother's rendition of traditional *Arbëreshë* songs so he could listen to and preserve them for the future (19–26).

28. In a note at the end of the book, Abate thanks those who have helped him, throughout the years, to celebrate the *festa del ritorno*, an *ad hoc* celebration that he and his friends have created "to initiate a dialogue and reconciliation between who stays and who leaves" (*La festa del ritorno* 163). Abate provides a longer explanation for the birth of this tradition in the essay "La prima festa del ritorno" (now in *Vivere per addizione*): "We have not changed our minds, dear friends: we want to celebrate the *feast of the return* [. . .] We don't want a spoken welcome, yadda yadda yadda. We want to embrace the town, meet the people who have stayed, our people—and at times we and they both forget this—people who are our relatives, our long lost friends, the shreds of our families dispersed in Europe" (126–127).

29. In Abate's works, however, the *nóstos* assumes connotations closer to those that Consolo detects in Vittorini's *Conversazione in Sicilia*: "Vittorini points with his *nóstos* to the ambivalence of the myth: the need to sink deeply into a mother's bowels, into the matrixes of memory; and the duty to climb out, to leave again, to set foot onto the land of the fathers, of society, of history" ("Conversation between Vincenzo Consolo and Mario Nicolao" 58). A more nuanced and even more positive concept of the *nóstos* is offered by Franco Cassano: "This back and forth, this departing-returning and this returning-departing, this leaving not to escape, but being confident in the *nóstos* (return) and also its opposite, being somewhere else when one is at home, this, which was long seen as a disease, is the possible solution" (*Southern Thought and Other Essays* 33).

30. For more information about these centers and their treatment of migrants, see both Chapter 7 of this book and Rovelli, *Lager Italiani*.

31. Biancofiore has written about the "poetics of the Chora (or Hora)," which she considers vital to understanding the "consecration" of a collective space in Abate's work. Though the new Hora cannot replace the foundational town of departure, it situates the present in a cultural dialogue with the past, even while acknowledging the impossibility of a return (Biancofiore).

32. During the Bosnian War, he traveled with UN relief efforts to Mostar and other Bosnian locales, reporting the differential treatments they received from the "Christian" Croats and the Muslim Bosnians. In 1999, he traveled alone to Belgrade to witness and speak on behalf of the Serbian population, when the city was repeatedly bombed by NATO during the war in Kosovo. He narrates these events in two essays, "Innamorarsi di Mostar" and "Notti di maggio del '99," collected in the volume *Pianoterra*.

33. Mangano has suggested that De Luca's protagonists constantly work with their hands, precisely because the writer wishes to never "separate writing from manual activities" and the writer has to emote one's lived experience in the pages of his books (188–189).

34. De Luca crafted a previous version in *Una nuvola come tappeto*, where he was more specific about this fusion of people: "For a citizen of the Mediterranean, whose genealogy is lost beyond the horizon of great-grandfathers, the conjecture [Borges's conjecture that his past could be connected to that of the 'ancient Jewish seed'] is likely. Who among my forefathers could exclude the Phoenicians, the Arabs, the Normans, and especially the Jews from the mixing of ancestors? One day we will find a way to go back generations and reconstruct the bundle of mixings that have preceded us and, in many ways, determined who we are [. . .] The Mediterranean will then become a fertile breeding ground for the many submerged ropes [. . .] One day we will be able to answer Borges's question and give a name to the centuries-old rivers of his and our own blood" (113–114).

35. Two poems in *Opera sull'acqua* (2002) also recall this event: "Fiumi di guerra" (17) and "Sirene." In the latter, he says, "I want to give my watch to an old man / who comes, sits and says 'dober dan' / [. . .] / Not that he cares what a Neapolitan man does / in Belgrade [. . .] / I hear the sirens of Belgrade / with those of Naples, left behind / by my mother's memories. Hearing is retroactive / it mingles bombings" (29–30).

36. These connections are explored in two essays, "Gusto: un brodo di pollo" (in *I colpi dei sensi* [1993]) and, briefly, "Più sud che nord" (in *Pianoterra* [2008]); in the poem "Tessera" in the collection *Opera sull'acqua* ("I once was the lard of malaria / ten kilos left to melt on a cot / smell of rubber in my armpits / seven degrees below the equator and 106°F under the skin" [37]); and, fictionalized, in the report by the missionary friend in *Aceto, arcobaleno*.

37. Twenty years later, De Luca retracts these musings about speed and pace in observing that "useless is simulating to be in a hurry, pantomime that elsewhere is useful to get people to move out of the way. Being in a hurry here is considered evidence of mental issues" (*Napòlide* 13).

38. De Luca's latest novel, *Il torto del soldato* (2012), also explores the relationship between Jews and their Nazi executioners. Elsewhere, De Luca has explained his conflicted relationship with Germany's language and people: "I remember listening to it as a struggle, even with repulsion, when spoken by the tourists who swarmed my childhood island during my southern summers. I studied it

only in passing to arrive to Yiddish. Celan's language then cured my disgust. I started leafing through it, silent and strong, in Rilke and Heine. Poets are stronger than executioners" (*Alzaia* 112).

39. Among the heroic figures cited by De Luca and Cazzullo are Luigi "Gino" Strada, the Italian surgeon and pacifist founder of the NGO called Emergency, which works with those wounded in war and by mine explosions; and the Catholic priest Oreste Benzi (who died in 2007), founder of the Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII, an organization dedicated to fighting prostitution and poverty as well as to helping people with disabilities and psychosocial issues.

Chapter 7

1. See also Molinari; Montanari and Cortese, "South to North" and "Third World Immigrants in Italy"; and Pittau and Di Sciullo.

2. See Bonifazi; Dal Lago; Pugliese; and Turco.

3. In 1990, noted writer Ben Jelloun devoted the story "Villa Literno" to this murder.

4. On the Italian juridical system, see Einaudi; and Tintori.

5. See also Agamben, *State of Exception*.

6. See Karakayali and Rigo.

7. For a discussion of this detention center, see Andrijasevic; and Rigo.

8. See the excellent documentary just released by directors Massimo Liberti and Andrea Segre, *Mare chiuso* (2012), that documents the fate of some of the travelers caught in the net of this repressive agreement.

9. See our analysis in Chapter 2.

10. See Delle Donne and Melotti; and Giannotti, Miccichè, and Ribero.

11. On January 1885, Pasquale Stanislao Mancini, Italy's foreign minister, stated that "the Red Sea is the key to the Mediterranean" (cited in Novati 157).

12. Among the few works that were published before the 1980s are Del Boca's *La Guerra d'Abissinia 1935–1941* (1965) and Rochat's *Il colonialismo italiano* (1973). Exemplary of how colonial memory is manipulated are the events surrounding the release of the film *The Lion in the Desert*, by Moustapha Akkad, and of the film *Fascist Legacy*, a documentary by Ken Kirby released by BBC in 1989. The Ministry of Culture halted screenings of Akkad's film, which narrates the colonization of Libya and the fierce resistance of Omar Mukhtar. Today the film is only shown in small art cinemas and at selected film festivals. The documentary, instead, was shown briefly on Italian private channels in 2003. Conversely, films that positively portray Italy's imperial conquests are widely disseminated. Examples are the already mentioned *Mediterraneo* by Gabriele Salvatores (1991), where Italian imperialism in the Dodecanese islands turns into a comedic love story, and *Le rose del deserto* by Mario Monicelli (2001). Giuliano Montaldo's *Tempo di uccidere* (1991), adapted from Ennio Flaiano's homonymous novel, provides a somewhat more balanced view.

13. For further discussion, see Andall and Duncan; Ben-Ghiat and Fuller; and Mellino and Triulzi.

14. For a discussion of the myths of Italians as *brava gente* and of their benign colonialism, see Del Boca, *Italiani, brava gente?*.

15. See, for example, Del Boca, "Obligations of Italy"; Jerary; Labanca; Rochat; and Sbacchi.
16. Our reference is to Augé's *Non Places*.
17. See Gnisci, *Il rovescio* and *La letteratura italiana*.
18. See also de Lourdes Jesus; Farias De Albuquerque; Laitef; and Salem and Maritano. For a discussion of these writers, see Parati, "Foreigners and Shadows." English anthologies that collect some of their works are Orton and Parati; and Parati, *Mediterranean Crossroads*.
19. Compare with S. Wright, "Can the Subaltern Speak?"
20. For additional discussion, see Scego, "Scrittori migranti."
21. There are a number of online journals and initiatives promoted by this generation of writers. See *Culture e letteratura della migrazione* (http://www.comune.fe.it/vocidalsilenzio); *Eks&Tra* (http://www.eksetra.net); *Letterranza* (http://www.letterranza.org); *Roma multietnica* (http://www.romamultietnica.it/it/bibliografie/letteratura-della-migrazione/bibliografie); *Sagarana* (http://www.sagarana.it/rivista/numero8/index.html); and *Voci dal silenzio: El-Ghibli. Rivista online della letteratura della migrazione* (http://www.el-ghibli.provincia.bologna.it).
22. For more information on these writers' countries of origin, see the online databank, created by Armando Gnisci and managed by Franca Sinopoli, by the title "BASILI" (an acronym for *Banca Dati Scrittori Immigrati in Lingua Italiana*, or "Databank Immigrant Writers in the Italian Language"). Its internet address is www.disp.let.uniroma.it/basili2001.
23. Also see the following anthologies: Lecomte; and Marianacci and Minore.
24. For additional discussion, including a description of festivals, see Martinenghi.
25. Informative discussions of *Albe* are Bryant-Jackson; Furno; and Picarazzi.
26. See Parati, *Migration Italy*, especially the chapter "Cinema and Migration" (104–141), as well as her "Shooting a Changing Culture."
27. For other examples of the intercultural dimension of this work, see also Carosi.
28. "In the Name of Allah, the Merciful, the Beneficent" (Bouchane 7). But see also other citations from *surahs* (17–18; 19; 63).
29. The reference to *L'Espresso* is contained in the "Author's Note" at the end of the *Immigrato*. The events of Villa Literno are described in the section "Napoli" (45–49).
30. For a discussion of the genesis of this work, see Ghezzi; and Methnani, "Una frase." For a good discussion of this novel, see also Luzi, "Migrazione."
31. For an insightful discussion of the history of human rights as territorially determined by the boundaries of the nation-state, particularly from the post–World War II era to the present, see Cornelisse.
32. We are referring to Mangione and Morreale's classic English-language account of the Italian migratory experience, *La storia*.
33. Two other authors from Eritrea deserve to be mentioned: Erminia Dell'Oro and Elisa Kidané. Born in Asmara in 1938 as a descendant of early Italian colonists from Lecco, Dell'Oro is the author of, among others, *Asmara addio* (1988) and *L'abbandono—Una storia Eritrea* (1991). A thinly veiled biography, *Asmara addio* narrates the story of the Conti family and their vicissitudes following World War II. *L'abbandono* focuses instead on racial questions in the colonies and is based on oral testimonies recorded by Dell'Oro. Elisa Kidané was born in Segheneiti in 1956, many years after Italy lost its colonies. In the

poetry collection *Orme nel cuore del mondo* (2004), Kidané voices the plight of Eritrea after Somali forces invaded it. The war that ensued and the independence of 1991 (e.g., "Eritrea"), however, did not lead to a better life, and many Eritreans had to cross the Mediterranean toward Italy and Europe, facing the danger of travel (e.g., "Naufraghi") and exploitative work conditions (e.g., "Prostituta").

34. Victor Magiar, another writer from Libya, was born into a family of Sephardic Jews who resettled in Ottoman lands after their expulsion from Spain in the fifteenth century. His novel *E venne la notte* (2003) is narrated from the point of view of a child, Hayìm Cordoba, who recalls the country's history from the arrival of the Italians in 1911 to independence.

35. Other writers from Ethiopia are Martha Nasibù and Maria Abbebù Viarengo. Nassibù was born in Addis Ababa in 1931, where she remained until 1936 before relocating to Italy. She is the author of *Memorie di una principessa etiope* (2005), an autobiographical narrative that describes the destruction of the precolonial Ethiopian feudal aristocracy with the arrival of the fascist squads despite the valiant fight of Martha's father, Nasibù Zamanuel, the right-hand man of Hailè Selassiè, to defend the ancient Orthodox-Copt civilization that had flourished on this eastern African land. Maria Abbebù Viarengo was born in 1949 in Ghidami of an Oromo mother and a Piedmontese father who had come to Ethiopia in 1928. In 1969, Maria moved to Italy. Her autobiography (portions of it have been published as *Andiamo a spasso?* [1994]) records her life through the many languages and cultures that have characterized it in Asmara and then Italy. While the experience of Viarengo's migration to Italy is that of an upper-class, privileged woman, the text refers to how Italians have reacted to her racial hybridity and her adaptations to endless attempts at categorizing her diversity.

36. The English translation of the novel is due out soon with Indiana University Press. Among Ghermandi's other publications are the short stories "Il telefono del quartiere," "Quel certo temperamento focoso," and "All'ombra dei rami sfacciati, carichi di rosso vermiglio."

37. The idea of the ethnic fusion of the Mediterranean race was Fascism's attempt to construct an alternative hegemony in the Mediterranean where Muslims inhabited many territories controlled by Britain and France. For a discussion of the evolving notions of race during Fascism, see De Donno. For a similar discussion focused on Libya, see J. Wright, "Mussolini."

38. For additional discussion on the widespread colonial phenomenon of *madamismo*, see Barrera; Iyob; and Sorgoni.

39. "I dedicate this book to my grandmother Berechtì, my grandmother Hagosà and my mother Rosina who were subjected to the racial laws of the Italian occupation" (Ghermandi, *Regina* 254).

40. Among other Somali writers, see Ali Farah and Fazel. Ali Farah, born in Verona in 1976 from a Somali father and an Italian mother, moved to Somalia in 1979, where she remained until 1991. She now resides in Rome. Her main publication to date is *Madre piccola*, a novel that reconstructs the plight of Somali individuals worldwide, bringing together their many tragedies in a coherent narrative consistently based on oral models. The novel dwells at length on the many ties that bind Italy to Africa, from biracial characters to a code switching between Somali and Italian. Born in Mogadishu, Fazel is the author of *Lontano da Mogadiscio* (1994) and *Nuvole sull'equatore* (2010). The autobiographical

Lontano da Mogadiscio recounts the transformation of Mogadishu into "the new Beirut" during the postcolonial period (46). Fazel's second novel, *Nuvole sull'equatore*, sketches a broad picture of Somalia, from the years of Italian colonization to the rule of general Siad Barre, through the point of view of a mixed-race child, Giulia.

41. Scego's works include the novels *La nomade che amava Alfred Hitchcock* (2003), *Oltre Babilonia* (2008), and the edited volume *Italiani per vocazione* (2005). *La nomade* is loosely based on Scego's mother and her early life as a nomad. Its value rests on its symbolic force of cultural mediation. *Oltre Babilonia* explores the Creolization of identities of Somali and Latin Americans by way of Zuhra and Mar, the daughters of Maryam and Miranda, who discover that their father is the Somali Elias.

42. For more on Scego's stories, see Gerrand; and Romeo. The following have also devoted illuminating pages to "Salsicce": Hanna; Portelli, "Fingertips"; Siggers Manson; and S. Wright, "Can the Subaltern Speak?"

43. The obelisk, thought to be 1,600 years old, is 24 meters tall. The Ethiopians demanded its return for years, after Hailè Selassié gifted it to Italy in the 1950s. It was finally shipped back and reinaugurated on its original site in 2008. For additional information, see Del Boca, "Myths."

44. The narrator highlights this racism by providing some examples at the end of the novel: "You have black skin and it brings germs and diseases"; "In school, the older kids called me Kunta Kinte"; "You are born to be a slave" (151–152).

45. Other significant Albanian writers are Elvira Dones, Leonard Guaci, Anilda Ibrahimi, and Ornela Vorpsi. Dones, who is a Swiss citizen and lives in the United States, writes in Italian, but her work deals more specifically with Albanian emigration and identity in a worldwide context. Her most famous book is *Vergine giurata* (2007), about a woman who transforms herself into a man while still in her Albanian village before expatriating abroad. Guaci has the distinction of being the first Albanian to publish a novel in Italian, *Panciera rossa* (1999), in which he narrates the story of Tomka, a bureaucrat in the Albanian communist party who reflects on the regime's and his own failures in light of fifty years of Albanian history. His most recent novel, *I grandi occhi del mare* (2005), parallels Amelio's *Lamerica* in showing the influence that Italian television had in mythologizing Italy and the West for a family of Albanians ostracized by the regime, who then had to face the reality of a country much different from its media portrayals. Ibrahimi, a journalist who moved to Rome in 1997, has written a number of novels. In *Rosso come una sposa* (2008), the narrator, a young woman named Dora, recounts in parallel segments the events and life of her grandmother Saba, who, born at the dawn of the twentieth century, has lived through the harsh horrors that have traversed the country's recent history by providing a matriarchal guidance and strength to the whole family, as well as of herself, who, raised in a much different Albania in the death throes of communism, holds on to her grandmother's values, even as she departs the country to find a new life and home in Rome, where she marries and begins her own family. Ibrahimi's recent work includes *L'amore e gli stracci di tempo* (2009), the story of two men, a Serb and a Kosovar, who meet in Belgrade but are separated by the war in the Balkans in 1998; and *Non c'è dolcezza* (2012), which explores the love-hate relationship between two childhood friends, Lila and Eleni, who marry two brothers, each tied, in different ways, to the machinations and impositions of the regime in the last years of communist

rule. Finally, Vorpsi, who first migrated to Italy but now resides in France, has written a number of novels in Italian, the most famous being *Il paese dove non si muore mai* (2005), which revisits the recent history of communist Albania from a matriarchal perspective.

46. *Peligòrgas* are an important symbolic referent for Hajdari, as suggested by their recurring presence in his poetry and by the title of a collection by the same name published in 2007. Indeed, that collection specifically comprises poems in which the country he left behind serves as the inspiration for a much more positive and optimistic worldview.

47. For additional interpretations of Hajdari's poetry, see the special issue of *El-Ghibli* edited by Taddeo, "Gëzim Hajdari: Il poeta della migrazione" (2006), and the edited volume by Gazzoni, *Poesia dell'esilio. Saggi su Gëzim Hajdari* (2010).

48. His subsequent novels, *M* (2002) and *Il buio del mare* (2007), are not as innovative, though they reveal something very important about second-generation migrant writers. No longer bound by the experience of migration *per se*, the writers move into new territory where being a migrant is no longer central to the narration and is substituted instead by a variety of other themes. In *M*, for example, it is the experience of economic and social alterity (i.e., living at the margins of society, being close politically to the anarchist fringes, and protecting other migrants and exploited people such as prostitutes) that becomes the narrative focus. In *Il buio del mare*, which does seem to take place in a dictatorial, authoritative country that could be Albania, the experience of childhood vis-à-vis oppression is what carries the plot.

49. Among other writers from the Balkans are Elvira Mujcic, Tamara Jadreičić, and Jadranka Hodzic.

50. See especially Matvejević's *Epistolario dell'altra Europa* (1992), *Il Mediterraneo e l'Europa* (1998), and *Mondo Ex* (2006).

Postface

1. For a complete reading of the judgment, see HUDOC's website: http://hudoc .echr.coe.int/sites/eng/pages/search.aspx?i=001-109231.

2. See http://www.governo.it/Governo/Costituzione/principi.html.

3. The recently held elections of February 25, 2013, have opened up the possibility that Italians are reconsidering their role within "fortress" Europe. Exhausted after years of economic recession, rampant unemployment, and political corruption and fed up with the extreme measures of austerity imposed by recent Italian governments at the behest of France, England, and Germany, Italians voted for a wide array of political parties and ideological alignments. While it was surprising that the party of former prime minister Silvio Berlusconi (who embodies the worst tendencies of political patronage and corruption as well as neoliberal, postcapitalist policies) finished second to the Center-Left Democratic Party, the unexpected "winner" of the elections was the Five Star Movement, headed by former comedian Beppe Grillo. Initially, there was dismay throughout Europe that 25 percent of the Italian electorate had voted for a nonparty that called for the halt of funding to political parties, term limits for elected officials, and a series of reforms ranging from sustainable growth and energy consumption to educational change, giving it enough clout to prevent

the continuance of "politics as usual" in both Italy and the European Union. In hindsight, however, political commentators have suggested that the results of these elections also point to a growing divide between northern and central Europe and its southern others (i.e., similar protest votes and demonstrations are occurring in Greece and Spain), who, with this vote, are voicing their growing discontent toward externally mandated policies that continue to chase a receding dream of ever-growing economic expansion and financial accumulation. In short, and in full awareness of the many socioeconomic problems that mire Italy, an argument could be made that the vote that left European financial and political institutions aghast was also a vote against a map for the future drawn by late, capitalist, Euro-Atlanticist modernity that is not shared *by* all but is mandated *to* all.

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