**Charles Burdett, Loredana Polezzi and Barbara Spadaro, eds. *Transcultural Italies.* *Mobility, Memory and Translation*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2020. Pp. 352.**

This edited volume is part of the *Transnational Italian Cultures* series which aims to set a new agenda for academic research on what constitutes Italian culture today by moving beyond the physical borders of Italy and identifying the existing or evolving transnational presences within the nation. Such a transnational approach allows to reflect, discuss and analyse the complexity of today’s global Italy. The starting point of this book is closely linked to the project from which it originates, *Trasnationalizing Modern Languages: Mobility, Identity and Translation in Modern Italian Cultures*, and aims to make a crucial contribution to the “transnational turn” in Italian Studies by investigating transnational cultural productions through the lens of mobility, memory and translation, as the book title indicates. The volume contains an introduction and 12 chapters which are divided into three parts. “Part One: Traces” (23-124) focuses on the presence that communities establish over time in different global contexts. “Part Two: Art, Objects, Artefacts” (127-224) puts the emphasis on the interpretation, reception and display of the realities of mobility. Finally, “Part Three: Mobilities of Memory” (227-340) investigates the nature, expression and movement of memory and translation and their transformative practices. In other words, as a whole, this volume recognises “mobility, memory and translation as creative forces in the production and transformation of Italian culture *across* and *beyond* borders” (7, italics in the original text).

As the editors explain in their “Introduction: Transcultural Italies” (1-20), the volume examines how the notion of *Italianness* has been dynamically reformulated and performed by individual and collective subjects in relation both to models associated with the nation state and to those emerging from other localities. In fact, the thirteen case studies included in this volume are drawn from a wide range of elements within the geographic, historical and linguistic map of Italian mobilities: Italians in the US, Australia and South America; colonial settlement in Africa across the Mediterranean; migrants within contemporary Italy; and the new circuits of global Italian mobility. Although each separate contribution cannot be directly cited here, it is accurate to say that all these case studies illustrate and contemplate on the editors’ intentions aptly and convincingly. Take for example, Chiara Giuliani’s “The Chinese Community in Italy, the Italian Community in China: Economic Exchanges and Cultural Difference” (275-295), in which the author argues to what extent and how the representations of the economic exchanges between Italy and China in a series of fictional and non-fictional texts tend to focus purely on cultural differences, which inevitably lead to negative outcomes; they work towards the distancing of two countries and two peoples, and thus fail to investigate, understand and look beyond these intercultural differences. Or Rita Wilson’s “Writing the Neighbourhood: Literary Representations of Language, Space and Mobility” (297-316), which provides a compelling analysis of the flourishing literary production by selected writers who have emerged from the last 30 years or so of immigration and their critical portrayal of “how transnational migrations have been affecting and transforming contemporary Italy and Italian identity as a whole” (299).

Most importantly, this volume highlights and unlocks the considerable potential of the transnational turn for the future development not only of Italian studies, but also of Modern Languages, understood as a disciplinary field, as a whole. This is particularly relevant in times when calls for the decolonisation of the academic curricula are resonating and Higher Education institutions around the world are engaging with this vital process for the improvement of course curricula, pedagogical practice, staff wellbeing and student experience. A transnational approach stresses processes of communication within and across linguistic, social and political boundaries, refuting the container model of national cultures. This allows Modern Languages as a discipline to go “beyond the methodological nationalism embedded within discipline and reflected in its established, institutionalised subdivision into “French studies”, “German studies”, and other subject areas” (8). However, although the editors attest the urge for a refocused investigation on the dynamic and plural nature of fundamental concepts and ideas such as identity, home and citizenship, they also acknowledge the intrinsic connection between the national and the transnational dimensions by emphasising the important role of the “trans-” suffix in stressing the co-existence and overlapping between national and transnational dimensions and by recognising that “their inescapable interdependency and productive nature […] does not replace or supersede the nation as a historical phenomenon” (4). Crucially, on the one hand, this volume shows that a transnational approach allows us to pluralise the concept of Italian cultures and identities and explore how notions of identity, national borders and citizenship, amongst others, are constantly mediated, translated and reactivated because of the diversity of cultures, their dialogical nature and their constant state of flux, within and, above all, beyond national borders. In this context, notions such as cultural mobility and travelling memory contribute substantially to our understanding of a renewed notion of Italian culture which can be both distinctive and inclusive. On the other, we are reminded that the transnational turn should be used as a tool for *decolonisation* and not as a tool for *recolonisation*, which as the term implies, would in fact replicate the conditions which existed under direct colonialism.

Finally, this volume is also particularly useful for teaching purposes. Combined with recent publications from the *Transnational Modern Languages* series (Liverpool University Press) including *Transnational Italian Studies* (co-edited by Charles Burdett and Loredana Polezzi, 2020), and *Transnational Modern Languages: A Handbook* (co-edited by Jennifer Burns and Derek Duncan, 2022), the contributions included in this book widen the range of new topics, perspectives and methodologies and, we should hope, will become a powerful point of reference by offering a new, connected vision for Modern and World languages in the 21st century and, above all, by shaping the *transcultural* identities of the next generation of modern linguists.

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