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Cannamela, Danila, Marzia Mauriello, and Summer Minerva, eds. *Italian Trans Geographies*. Albany (NY): State University of New York Press, 2023. Pp. 384. ISBN 9781438494586. \$95.00 (hardcover). ISBN 9781438494593. \$31.95 (eBook).

Italian Trans Geographies is a long-awaited and ambitious volume, arriving at a moment of significant expansion in queer translation and theoretical debate within the field of Italian studies. The book exceptionally charts the spatial, cultural, and narrative intersections of trans lives and Italian identities. Through a substantial blend of memoir, archival reconstruction, poetry, interviews, and theoretical reflection, the editors bring together voices often silenced in both national historiographies and global queer studies. This anthology stands as the first of its kind to foreground Italian trans and gender-nonconforming experiences across time and space.

In the introduction, Danila Cannamela positions the volume as a critical queer intervention into dominant cis-heteronormative narratives in Italian culture. Following in the political footsteps of Porpora Marcasciano's work and activism, the editors understand storytelling not only as a method but also as an interpretive framework. Collective and personal memories, irony, and self-reflection animate much of the collection's conceptual force; the result is a transformative and nuanced perspective on longstanding historical debates—particularly the 1970s, marked by queer and trans emergence, and the 1980s, often labeled as a period of regression, here reimagined as an era of new social transformations and radical political claims.

Divided into eight parts, the book casts a decolonial gaze on Italy, overturning and expanding its geography by looking from the South toward the center and consistently engaging with multiple Italian diasporas. In highlighting the cultural protagonism of the South, the volume uncovers a largely overlooked legacy of extraordinary cultural and experiential richness, intertwining historical discourse with the present times through interviews, first-person narratives, and poetry. Part I unfolds with a captivating cross-generational narrative between Porpora Marcasciano's autobiography—recently published in English translation by Rutgers, and wealthy in evocative imagery of a flamboyant, hedonistic Rome of the 1970s and 1980s—and the poetic voice of Giovanna Cristina Vivinetto, perhaps the leading trans poet in contemporary Italy. This opening establishes a lively intergenerational dialogue: Marcasciano revisits her youth amidst radical activism, while Vivinetto critically explores family normativity, Christian tradition, and trans visibility, now increasingly detached from collective struggle by neoliberal individualism. The contrast offers a poignant reflection on the evolution of trans identity and a collective longing that is at once personal, political, and poetic.

Part II of this original volume focuses on the *femminielli* of Naples—a community situated in an ahistorical dimension that resists and exceeds Western taxonomies of gender and identity. The volume is at its most original when it recovers these local idiosyncrasies of gender variance, extending the scope of trans geographies beyond Anglo-American paradigms and presenting the *femminielli* not as folkloric curiosities but as radical gender abolitionists.

Part III sheds light on the geographies of gender variance in central Italy. It starts by describing the precarious yet vibrant subcultural world of Roman nightlife of 1970s and 1980s through the memoirs of Porpora Marcasciano and Romina Cecconi, which are forthcoming in a 2027 English translation. These recollections conjure a Felliniesque atmosphere where trans women, migrants, sex workers, and poets created spaces of community care to contrast violent stigmatization. In contrast, Bologna's Cassero emerges as a site of political negotiation, where institutional support helped secure public recognition for the LGBTQ+ community. Collectively, these narratives reveal the transformative power of trans relationality as both politically strategic and affectively generative—fostering communal world-making.

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Parts V and VI of *Italian Trans Geographies* feature several powerful accounts of trans activism, many of which are rooted in Bologna's prominent political context. Adopting a strong intersectional lens, these chapters expose underexplored political and historical dimensions of trans experience. Mazen Masoud, a racialized trans activist and current president of MIT (*Movimento Identità Trans*, Trans Identity Movement), critiques the role of difference feminism in sidelining queer and trans perspectives from broader political discourse in Italy. Helena Velená revisits the 1980s as a time when queer thought was shaped by the collapse of social conflict—brought on by repression and the heroin crisis—by reimagining activism through art, funk music, and neighborhood-based civic engagement rooted in mutuality and community needs. Simone Cangelosi's *Una nobile rivoluzione* (*A Noble Revolution*), a film about trans activist Marcella Di Folco, explores the importance of institutional engagement. Di Folco, MIT's first president, made history in 1995 as the first trans person elected to a regional office in Europe—a landmark moment in the politics of representation.

The final section, "Transitions Across the Ocean," perhaps the most fragile and ambitious of the book, turns to the Italian American diaspora and its queered cartographies. It attempts to encompass both historical diasporic trajectories and contemporary back-and-forth migrations. Contributions by Summer Minerva and Michela Griffo reclaim Italian American queer genealogies long overshadowed by mafia-coded masculinity and conservative Catholicism. Of particular interest, Griffo's *Io sono sangue* ("I Am Blood"), a searing testimony, highlights the violence and complicity embedded in the intersections of Italian American identity and LGBTQ+ life. These two final parts foreground how queerness and Italianness have often been constructed as incompatible within the American cultural imaginary—and how reclaiming both can serve as an act of defiance.

Italian Trans Geographies is more than an account of trans lives in Italy; it reimagines Italy itself—its history, its public memory, its communities, and its embodied spaces. By bridging trans studies, Italian cultural studies, oral history, and performance studies, the editors present a model of interdisciplinary scholarship that is both intellectually rich and politically urgent. The inclusion of a historical timeline and original translations enhances its accessibility and enhances its scope, while the volume's use of diverse genres—from poetry to photography—extends its affective and intellectual reach. Most noteworthy is the chapter on Lina Pallotta's photographs of Porpora Marcasciano, which offers a visual counter-narrative to dominant representations of trans femininity. It also provides generous space to the intimate emotional connection between the two women—a bond that has endured for decades and continues to animate their creative work. Through layered and emotionally charged accounts, the collection challenges linear narratives and the erasure of trans subjectivities from dominant cis-heteronormative imaginaries. It offers a compelling case for understanding trans experience not as marginal or exceptional, but as integral to the cultural, linguistic, and political fabric of Italian modernity.

As Cannamela notes, "words have a world-making function" (8)—and this volume indeed speaks worlds into being. In their closing reflection, Cannamela and Mauriello pose a provocative question: "How can mapping overlooked geographies reshape the Anglo-American globalized understanding of LGBTQ+ movements?" (12). *Italian Trans Geographies* offers a fascinating answer, while also opening further lines of inquiry into trans citizenship, the ethics and theory of translation, and the role of nostalgia and mourning in queer and trans memory work.

This volume is not only a timely and important contribution to trans and queer Italian studies; it also challenges public memory and dominant narrative by accounting for those whose lives have shaped—and continue to shape—the possibilities of being trans, both within and beyond Italy. It constitutes an essential resource for scholars of queer/trans archives, Italian cultural studies, and decolonial approaches to knowledge production.

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