

Elizabeth Zaroni. *Migrant Marketplaces: Food and Italians in North and South America.* Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2018. xii + 273 pp. \$99.00, cloth, ISBN 978-0-252-04165-5.

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Published on H-Italy (March, 2020)

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In the towering, fluorescent-lit aisles of Costco, a US-based warehouse superstore, one finds Garofalo-brand pasta stacked up by the ton. Customers can purchase a variety in bulk, including gemelli, spaghetti, casarecce, and penne. “Made in Italy” is emblazoned on each package, as well as the tagline “authentic Italian lifestyle,” which capitalizes on a longstanding marketing formula that links Italy with authenticity, tradition, and artisanal excellence. This approach is vastly different from the early marketing strategies of Garofalo, a three-hundred-year-old company based near Naples, which, at the turn of the twentieth century, depended more on association with illustrious men like King Vittorio Emanuele II than on connection to Italy as a signifier of authenticity. It is a testament to the company—and the enduring power of migrant marketplaces—that Garofalo pasta now reaches tens of millions of consumers on a global scale and grosses more than one hundred million euros in profit each year, a success story of food and Italians in the twenty-first century.

In her book, *Migrant Marketplaces: Food and Italians in North and South America*, Elizabeth Zaroni lays the historical groundwork for the global commodification and circulation of Italian foodstuffs and, importantly, the cultural imaginaries about Italians and Italianness that developed

in conjunction with these processes. Integral to the development of such foodways was the rise of what Zaroni calls “migrant marketplaces,” that is, “urban spaces defined by material and imagined transnational links between mobile people and mobile goods” (p. 2). Migrant marketplaces provide the theoretical frame for Zaroni’s main argument, namely, “the formation of Italian migrants’ consumer habits and identities were transnational and gendered, connected to food goods and to ideas about masculinity and femininity circulating in the Atlantic economy” (p. 3).

Migrant Marketplaces is a solidly researched, well-written book that offers a fresh perspective on Italian food and foodways via the histories of Italian migrant communities in North and South America. What is innovative about Zaroni’s work is both its hemispheric orientation and its gendered reading of migrant marketplaces. By weaving together accounts of Italian migration to Buenos Aires and New York City through the lens of food history, Zaroni brings together bodies of scholarship and migration projects that are too often kept apart, when in fact, as she proves convincingly in this book, such projects were interlinked phenomena. Furthermore, Zaroni tracks a shift in the consumptive economy for Italian foodstuffs, from male-oriented to female-centered, which particularizes the commodification of Ital-

ian food as being linked constitutively to the experience of migration, and at the same time, situates its production and consumption within the larger context of global industrialization.

Zanoni's work adds a new dimension to pioneering studies on migration, gender, and food, such as Loretta Baldassar and Donna Gabaccia's edited collection *Intimacy and Italian Migration: Gender and Domestic Lives in a Mobile World* (2011), Simone Cinotto's *The Italian American Table: Food, Family, and Community in New York City* (2013), Donna Gabaccia's *Italy's Many Diasporas* (2000), and Fabio Parasecoli's *Al Dente: A History of Food in Italy* (2014). The theoretical framing and the hemispheric approach advanced by this book also make inventive contributions to a variety of fields, including migration studies, Italian American studies, Latin American studies, modern European history, Latin American history, and twentieth-century US history. While reading *Migrant Marketplaces*, I was also struck by its resonance with Pierre Bourdieu's work on *habitus* and distinction, that is, the system of dispositions that educe a shared perception of the social world and the ways cultural capital and aesthetic taste work together to mark one's privileged space in that social world.[1] What Zanoni does well in her book is to set Bourdieu's concepts into motion by attending to the ways mobile people and mobile goods simultaneously produce and consume Italianness as both an object of taste and a lived-in category.

Migrant Marketplaces is organized into six chapters and an introduction and epilogue. The book follows a chronological trajectory, broadly speaking. The first three chapters focus on the period between 1880 and 1914, the apex of Italian migration to *le due Americhe*. The next three chapters address World War I, the interwar period, and the fascist regime, ending with the outbreak of World War II. Zanoni trains her lens on two sites, Argentina and the United States, the most popular overseas destinations for Italian people and trade goods at the turn of the twentieth century. She

tracks the evolution of the transnational and gendered formations of migrant marketplaces in Buenos Aires and New York City, respectively, especially the points where they come together but also those at which they remain distinct.

Chapter 1 focuses on men and markets in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Specifically, Zanoni sheds light on the fantasies of elite migrant entrepreneurs who imagined commerce to be a less violent form of colonialism, a means to build *la più grande Italia* (the greatest Italy) in the Americas through "merchant princes and commercial warriors for the homeland" (p. 23). Yet the reality was different on the ground, for migrants cared less about building the Italian nation-state and more about enhancing "the material security for their individual families in transnational economies" (p. 38).

Chapter 2 considers how the migration of people and the consumption of imported foodstuffs shaped racial boundaries differently in Argentina and the United States. In the former, the idea of *latinità* created a fraternal bond between Italians and Argentines and elevated "foods and their consumers as forces of civilization" (p. 50). In the latter, the migrant table was viewed as "chaotic, filthy, and morally suspect," reinforcing a rigid, segregated system of beliefs that "viewed Italians and their foodways as racially inferior" (pp. 63, 65).

Chapter 3 discusses the production and consumption of domestically produced Italian foodstuffs, or what were known as *tipo italiano* goods. Driven by restrictive trade and tariff policies, particularly in the US, migrant entrepreneurs developed Italian-style goods on a large scale and introduced into migrant marketplaces products similar to imports from Italy but at lower price points. Distinctions between Italian goods and *tipo italiano* goods became muddled in short order, especially in the wine industry. Such products forged an *italianità* among migrants that helped to reconcile their "daily existence as low-wage transnational workers" with the elite fantasies of commercial

empire building in the Americas detailed in chapter 1 (p. 89).

Chapter 4 explores World War I as a crucial turning point in the evolution of migrant marketplaces insofar as the war brought Italian migrant women into the economy as both producers and consumers, which, in turn, feminized postwar consumption of Italian imported foods. Wartime campaigns like wool and tobacco drives for Italian soldiers were led by migrant women. These women also made consumer decisions (in other words, “Buy Italian”) that fell in line with patriotic duty. The war transformed “women’s position in a global growing consumer economy,” and the industry followed suit, reorienting both its products and advertising toward female consumers (p. 126).

Chapter 5 examines the expansion of US imperialism in Latin America during the interwar period. Specifically, it looks at how aggressive US American commercial investment prompted a cultural response centered on *latinità* in Argentina. US imperialism changed migrant marketplaces in two important ways: one, it reframed them as lucrative, rather than secondary, consumer markets, and two, it reoriented them hemispherically, between North and South America, away from transatlantic routes. By the 1920s and ’30s, migrants had a “variety of ‘Italian’ goods at their disposal—imports, *tipo italiano*, U.S., and Argentine—to invent and perpetuate transnational identities” (p. 156).

Chapter 6 considers how the fascist regime affected migrant marketplaces, and how external and internal economic policies, like sanctions and autarky, prompted a reconceptualization of Italian migration that would harness *gli italiani all'estero* (Italians abroad) into the service of the regime. Fascist propaganda campaigns created a culturally based understanding of *italianità* that “came to influence migrants’ consumer options and identities” (p. 161). Yet migrant female consumers represented an unresolved paradox for the regime: on the one hand, they were valued as pro-

ducers of modern, fascist Italian identity because of their buying power, while on the other, they challenged fascist ideals of women as self-sacrificing mothers and wives.

In the epilogue, Zanoni gestures to fruitful directions of future research. In particular, she shows how Italian foods became associated with high culture and refined consumption on such a scale that Garofalo pasta is sold at Costco and venues like Eataly have been constructed around the world. She also notes that Italian food is being remade once again through new, vibrant migrant marketplaces in Italy populated by immigrants from Eastern Europe, North Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. To consider the ongoing effects of globalization on food and food cultures is to underscore how migrant marketplaces continue to transcend borders, determine taste, and shape Italy and Italians transnationally.

Note

[1]. Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique on the Judgement of Taste*, trans. Richard Nice, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2010) (originally published in 1979); and Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977) (originally published in 1972).

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Citation: Stephanie Malia Hom. Review of Zanoni, Elizabeth. *Migrant Marketplaces: Food and Italians in North and South America*. H-Italy, H-Net Reviews. March, 2020.

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