

Film Reviews

Reviewing Other Aspects of the Italian Diaspora

The films reviewed in this issue of the *Italian American Review* have little in common formally even though each adopts and adapts different elements from the documentary tradition: stock footage, constructed montages, scripted interviews, talking-head interviews, impromptu interviews, diegetic andexegetic sound, on-location shooting, and filmmakers who may or may not appear on screen. Thematically, they are all related to issues of transnationalism, globalization, and migration as these topics concern Italy. The *Italian American Review* by its own definition publishes scholarship "about the history and culture of Italian Americans, as well as other aspects of the Italian diaspora." Given that focus, the films reviewed in this issue might seem at first glance misplaced.

Three of them focus on contemporary migration to Italy (*Visit India*, *18 Ius soli*, and *Io sono Li*). While each alludes to or directly references the history of Italian emigration, these films are engaged principally with the political, legal, and cultural complications that have arisen in the last thirty years because of Italy's own mass influx of immigrants. Another film reviewed here (*Italy: Love It or Leave It*) places the contemporary emigration of university-educated, Italian-born men and women as a backdrop to a critical investigation of the ongoing political and economic instability of Italy. And the fifth film reviewed, *Refugees in Cinecittà*, documents a little-known aspect of the history of Italy's film industry and its surprising relationship both to the United States and to displaced people, offering thus simultaneously a different slant on the term *migration* and an important reminder of how enmeshed the United States has been with Italy.

In a sense then, the films reviewed in this issue are at odds with the basis of much Italian American studies scholarship, with its standard focus on the experiences of the Italian diaspora physically outside of Italy. These films and the reviews themselves ask us to recognize the dynamic relationship Italy has to the transnational movement of people and culture. They challenge us to be mindful of the continued reshaping of the history and culture of Italy, rather than imagine Italy and Italian culture as static. They encourage scholars and students of Italian American studies to expand further our understanding of the multitude of ways Italy, Italians, and objects and people related to both interact with one another and with the world at large. In other words, to consider how the geopolitical state of Italy reflects and responds to Italian migration, broadly understood.

These reviews by no means mark the first (nor the last) time the relaunched *Italian American Review* publishes film reviews that focus on Italy rather than on Italian emigrants to the United States or to other countries; however, it is the first time we have clustered such reviews. Grouping these films allows us to highlight the wide breadth of contemporary experiences and historical recovery that still need our attention and the multitude of cinematic journeys we still have to take.

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