La stanza degli specchi. Impegno politico-culturale e diaspora Italiana

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Terminologies of Mobility: Activism and the Politics of Language

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1. Introduction

My political activism is the politics of street demonstrations, marches, and picket lines – and not activism in electoral politics. An occasional leader, I am most often a dependable rank-and-file activist who – naively perhaps – believes in people power. I prefer such activism because it translates more easily across national borders than nation- and state- based elections and voting. Given my highly mobile life, my activism has necessarily bridged multiple countries. An early memory has me joining feminist friends to distribute the 193-page pamphlet, "Women and Their Bodies" to every student at an American women's college. (The pamphlet subsequently became *Our Bodies Ourselves,* Boston Women's Health Collective 1971). I showed up for anti-war marches and I designed picket signs for striking graduate students. I shivered in bitter cold temperatures during an *Ersatzgeld Boycott* march and enjoyed fine spring weather for a Berlin *Ostermarsch*. Together with my son I protested the Gulf War in suburban White Plains, gathered with colleagues to support LGBTQ colleagues in Pittsburgh and Charlotte, and supported student and staff strikes in Minneapolis and Toronto. The streets have been especially active these past five years, and I've been there, on the ground, supporting Black Lives; Indigenous, Women's, and Immigrant Rights; and anti-racism and labor causes in Canada, the United States, and France. Direct, collective action and the politics of the body and the street are my political comfort zone.

This activism does not emerge from my identity as an Italian-American. To write a personal story of that activism, I focus here instead on the politics of language. This essay discusses two cases of collective action undertaken to change the language we use when discussing migration. My work on migration began with my family's history of migration between Italy and the United States. The essay is also the product of a recent epiphany. I had long hesitated to portray

scholarly work as activism, yet recent reflection forced me to acknowledge that twice in my life I had consciously considered and then rejected work as a full-time activist because I wanted to pursue power and influence as a scholar teacher. And that is what I have done.

I am aware that epiphanies often emerge from autoethnography (Ellis, Adams, Bochner 2011: 2), but this essay began instead as life review. Life review is "a process of evaluating one's personal memories", while assigning meaning to them (Westerhof 2015: 1). Life review predictably begins in late life: at age 72, life review is part of my daily routine. Like autoethnography, life review heightens the desire to tell autobiographical stories. Rethinking the meaning of political activism has helped me to revise my story. I have been a teacher, writer, and speaker who chooses words carefully and with purpose. Those choices have empowered me to act collectively and to change how scholars, students, and readers perceive and understand their world. Although both the cases explored below produced change, both also reveal the limits of the politics of language.

2. Terminologies of mobility and the politics of language

My interest in terminologies of mobility and the politics of language began not in Italy but in Germany in the 1970s when I discovered *Begriffsgeschichte*. *Begriffsgeschichte* focuses on concepts; it typically includes attention to the semantic history of specific terms. I remember being struck by how much time – and space in their dissertations – German friends devoted to etymology and historical evolution of their key concepts.

This essay examines terminologies of mobility and the politics of their use in several languages including English and Italian. By terminologies of mobility, I mean simply the words that scholars, activists, and everyday speakers of a language use to label, categorize, differentiate, and describe people on the move. According to the Oxford English Dictionary Online (hereafter OED), terminologies constitute a system of specialized words that are related to each other. Every scholarly discipline, every language group, and every governing regime (whether nationally or internationally) deploys unique and changing clusters of terms for mobile persons. Although sometimes asserted as objective, neutral, or merely bureaucratic, terminologies of mobility submitted to scrutiny always reveal evaluations and hierarchies that connect them. A single individual might be labeled a mobile person (assessing her value or significance relative to an immobile person), evaluated positively as an immigrant, settler, or refugee, or feared

as a transient, a migrant laborer, or an invader.

Communicating about human mobility – and the choice of or advocacy for particular terminologies – reflects and generates conflicts and struggles, constituting the politics of language (Lakoff 1990, 2000). Through communication, terminologies are invented; some spread or become popular, others disappear. The meanings of terminologies change – sometimes radically – over time. However, older meanings also sometimes adhere to terminologies as they are re-purposed for new uses.

Sources for understanding the history of terminologies of mobility are readily available. Etymological dictionaries are an obvious starting place. Any large archive of digital text also provides what is called a corpus for analysis; scholars have developed digital tools and methods for analyzing them (Huang, Yao 2015; Moretti 2013). Although not without its limits, Google Books Advanced Search tool identifies examples (and "snippets") of usage and changing meanings by date in one of the world's largest and most accessible collections of digital texts; it is searchable in multiple languages. Google NGram Viewer allows researchers to track the frequency of use over time of specific terms in several languages. In this essay I use life review, etymological dictionaries, and Google tools to discuss the politics of terminologies of mobility.

3. The politics of language: immigration, emigration, or migration?

My first example of activism in the politics of language focuses on how I came to advocate rather vigorously for the study of migration rather than of emigration or immigration – terms that privilege the writing of national histories (emigration from Italy; immigration to the United States) rather than telling stories of how migrants understood or experienced their own lives. My activism originated in multilingual encounters that made me aware of how significantly English-language terminologies of mobility reflected distinctively American histories of nation building. Beginning around 1980, scholarly contestation over terminologies occurred within and across languages, a reminder that the study of migration has always been multi-sited (Gabaccia forthcoming).

In 1970, when I wrote an undergraduate history paper on Italian women in the American suffrage movement, my professor, Charles H. Trout (1935-2006), wrote "I wish you had told me you were interested in Immigration History!" Frankly, I had never heard of Immigration History; no course of that title was offered at Mount Holyoke College. I can now see that Mr. Trout positioned my

still inchoate intellectual interests within the then-dominant terminology of mobility in the United States – that of immigration. Had I asked him, I am sure he would have emphasized the importance of this scholarly field for a country that had, only a decade earlier (Gabaccia 2010: 11, 23), begun to celebrate itself as a Nation of Immigrants.

Within only a few years I became uncomfortable with the study of immigration because the term was so rarely used outside the United States. In the early 1970s I was learning new languages (German, Italian) while traveling and living in Europe; the economic crisis of 1973 was ending the contract work programs that had linked family economies in Turkey, Yugoslavia, and Italy to West Germany, Belgium, France, the Netherlands, and Sweden. While traveling around the Mediterranean, I met many older men who had returned to Greece or Italy to live on their American or German savings, social security, or old age pensions. These men were as eager to tell their stories (in English, Italian, or German), as I was to consider their stories as a possible dissertation topic. But would that dissertation be Immigration History? Even today, the OED defines an immigrant as "a person who migrates into a country as a settler". The men I met had migrated but were not settlers. Americans called them immigrants, but they had not remained in the United States. And the men who had worked in Germany were never called immigrants but rather *Gastarbeiter (*guest workers). If not immigration historians, who would read histories of repatriates (Saloutos 1956), returners, or remigrants (Hoerder 1982)?

As a language learner, I was acutely aware of terminologies of mobility. So differently did terminologies resonate within their respective languages that both the men and I typically avoided using direct translations of some terms. Thus a man might insert the English term immigrant or the German term *Gastarbeiter* into an Italian- or English-language conversation rather than refer to himself as an *immigrante,* guest worker, *immigrato*, or *lavoratore ospite* (a direct translation that, according to Google Books' Italian language corpus, came into use only after 1990). In 1976-1977, while living in Germany and traveling to Sicily for research, I was also very aware that many Germans denied their country was (or ever could become) a Nation of Immigrants like the United States – *Deutschland ist kein Einwanderungsland*! The same persons Americans called immigrants were, to Germans, *Fremder* or *Ausländer* – foreigners. Living in Berlin, I saw graffiti demanding "*Ausländer Raus!"* (foreigners, get out!) and I began to sense that *Gastarbeiter* was a more positive evaluation than *Fremdarbeiter* or just plain *Ausländer.*

Had I analyzed the origins of terminological differences, I would have learned

almost immediately that the politics of imperial expansion and nation-building drove terminological change. In English, for example, etymology identified two periods of rapid terminological transformation, first in the years after 1066 and again in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The roots of migration, emigration, and immigration are not to be found in Old English, a West Germanic language spoken by early Anglo-Saxons. Between 1066 and 1700 Old English terms for mobility such as *forweorpnes*, *faerenness, leóredness, geleoredness*, *ymbcerr, wtecscipe* and *wealh* ("Old English Translator") were replaced by terminologies originating in classical Latin Rome and introduced by French-speaking Norman invaders. Most Old English terms differentiated among forms of unhappiness caused by leaving or being forced away from home to wander among strange peoples. New terms instead focused on those entering Britain. In the 1400s, a new noun, foreigner, melded Old French *forain* (vulgate Latin's *foranus* – outsider, outlander, coming from outside) and Old English *faerenness*, which had meant, roughly, movement from place to place or wanderer. After 1500, English speakers increasingly also used barbarian (Latin *barbaros)* and stranger (Latin *extrāneus*) as terms for mobile outsiders.

The most used Latin-origin terminologies for mobile humans – foreigners, barbarians, strangers – were decidedly negative. Even the neutral-sounding term mobility, when first used in English in the 1690s, described a threatening crowd or mob. This negative evaluation of mobile humans had deep roots. Like Greece and China before it, Latin Rome portrayed their civilization as sedentary and superior to their mobile neighbors – the nomadic pastoralists, herders, hunters, and seafarers whom Latin speakers called barbarians, foreigners, and invaders (Golden 2002: 72-73). Terminologies for the types of mobility common among Greeks and Romans were evaluated as benign: Greek merchants and urban Jewish exiles were scattered seeds (*diasporas);* Roman conquerors of new territories were not barbarians but *coloni* (Mann 1983). In Latin Rome *migratio* referred to inconsequential residential moves or simply meant changeable, as in modern Italian – *la donna è mobile,* the lady is fickle.

English speakers began to use the words migration, emigration, and immigration as overseas expansion and colonization began after 1600. According to the OED, migration came to mean human as well as animal movement at that time. Scholars especially associate the terms emigration and immigration with the emergence of national sovereignty after the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia (Bauder 2018). English-speakers first referred to emigration and immigration (differentiating inward and outward movement) in the 1640s and 1650s. One hundred years later they invented new nouns including migrant – first used in 1752 – and emi-

grant, first used in 1754, for mobile individuals. Emigrant was the most positive and associated with imperial expansion and the spreading of British civilization to the Americas and beyond. Throughout the British Empire the term emigrant soon became the preferred label for people we today call settlers or colonizers. In the United States, Americans especially valorized emigrants, whether they were European newcomers or white Americans traveling west: both carried civilization and replaced indigenous peoples (Gabaccia 2010: 12-13).

While celebrating emigrants, nineteenth-century Americans at first attached older, negative associations to those they labeled as foreigners (the most widely used term in the nineteenth century) or as immigrants, a term that the OED dates to 1805 in a North American publication. Until the twentieth century the terms immigrant and foreigner, when used in American English for those arriving on their shores, worked to stigmatize impoverished wage-earners from Asia, Ireland, and southern and eastern Europe. The United States became a Nation of Immigrants only after these most recently arrived and disparaged immigrants had struggled politically for decades to prove their worthiness, transforming the meaning of immigrant.

Terminologies of mobility in other languages shared neither the same etymology nor the same political histories of the United States or Britain. Google NGrams for several languages reveal that comparable terms appeared in Spanish (*emigración)* and German (*Wanderung)* at roughly the same time as in English (in the 1600s) but in Italian and French they found use only after 1700. Words comparable to emigration (*Auswanderung, emigrazione,* émigration*)* appeared in German, Italian and French during the 1700s – presumably linked to growing assertions of national sovereignty, which demanded differentiation between those coming in and going out. Unsurprisingly, attention to *emigrazione* became hegemonic in Italy. As in American English, use of terms resembling immigration developed later (after 1820 in Spanish and British English and after 1850 in French and Italian). References to immigration surpassed emigration only in 1880 in French, in 1890, in Spanish and American English, but in German and Italian, only in the past twenty years.

In several European languages a second period of terminological change occurred in the aftermath of World II as the United Nations created an international regime to protect those it labeled refugees. In German, the Latin-origin term *Migration* began to replace the older *Wanderung* around 1950 as use of *Flüchtling* (refugee) temporarily challenged *Fremder* and *Aüslander*. References to immigrants predominated only in American English, while migrant was increasingly used in Britain, again, presumably to differentiate refugees from others. Down to

the present, étranger/ère*, Ausländer/in* or *Fremde/r, straniero/a*, and *extranjero/a,* remain the most used terms for a mobile person entering France, Germany, Italy, or a Spanish-speaking country. Alas, the Google Books digital archive does not distinguish peninsular from Latin American Spanish, where use of *inmigrante* may have been more widespread and positive. (Because of limited space I must also leave aside the question of why French-speakers differentiate between the *immigrant/e* – a recently arrived person – from the *immigré*/ée*,* whom French speakers consider more settled. As best I can tell, the distinction did not develop in the Italian language).

I became an activist in language politics largely to escape what Andreas Wimmer and Nina Glick Schiller (2002) later called methodological nationalism – the relation between Immigration History and American nationalism that had struck me in the 1970s. I knew that from a migrant point of view, no radical transformation occurs with passage from the sending country's category of emigrant to the destination country's category of immigrant. I knew this personally. During my first decade as a scholar, I worked in both Germany (1979-82, 1985-86) and in the United States. Writing about those departing Italy as immigrants (Gabaccia 1984) was advantageous while seeking employment in the United States: it positioned me as a U.S. historian in a large scholarly field. (Writing about emigrants positioned me as an historian of Italy, a much smaller field.) Is she an Americanist? A Europeanist? It was a question I heard more than once.

I more fully embraced the terminology of migration (Gabaccia 1988) as a Fulbright Scholar with Dirk Hoerder's Labor Migration Project at the University of Bremen. Thereafter I consistently called myself an historian of international migration rather than an immigration historian. Scholarly enthusiasm for theories of transnationalism and globalization in the 1990s encouraged me to re-imagine my research and teaching agendas and to escape what I thought of as the tyranny of national history (Renan 1992). In the 1990s I began teaching World History and developed courses on the History of Global Migrations: my transition from Immigration to Migration History was complete. As a researcher, I became increasingly interested in migration's impact on the formation of sending and destination nation states and on migrants' acquisition of national identities.

Advocacy for Migration History in the United States reminded Americans that many countries had long histories of migration -- but no immigrants. Meanwhile, American histories of immigration excluded migrations – the slave trade, the expulsion of indigenous peoples – that were just as central as immigration in defining the American nation. I also began to absorb the insights of world historians who had embraced a very broad definition of migration (Manning 2005; Hoerder

2002). With capacious periodizations stretching over millennia, world historians knew human mobility had long preceded the nation states that largely determined scholarly terminologies of mobility. They offered a definition of migration that included nomadism and foraging, slave trade and other forced movements, labor migrations, merchants and diasporas, urbanization, and even so-called domestic or internal moves. Their definition did not sharply differentiate between migrants and refugees but included refugees within a broad migration typology. Writing world or global history evaded the tyranny of the nation, encouraged comparisons of migrations across time and space, and facilitated the posing of questions, rarely asked by historians of individual nations. Are humans a mobile species? Are today's migrations an unprecedented crisis as social scientists asserted? For me, the most tantalizing of unasked questions was how large-scale migrations shaped the creation of the modern world of nation states.

Advocacy for Migration History was a transnational movement. In the United States, Immigration History had already existed for a century, but Germany's historians had never really embraced either *Einwanderungsgeshichte* or *Auswanderungsgeschichte*. After 1980, however, the writing of *Migrationsgeschichte* exploded. Scholars writing in Italian continued to prefer *la storia dell'emigrazione*; in Italy, histories of *immigrazione* focused on the United States. In Great Britain, Immigration History and Migration History had developed together after 1960 but the writing of Migration History far surpassed Immigration History after 1990. In northern and western Europe in the 1990s and worldwide after 2000, scholars across disciplines also began to think of themselves as engaged in an interdisciplinary scholarly field, Migration Studies (Gabaccia forthcoming).

Collective action among scholars succeeded in promoting the study of migration and changing the meaning of the term, but only within the academy. Only in the United States, and possibly also in Canada and Australia, does Immigration History continue today as hegemonic within national histories. And even in the United States, references to Migration History have trended upwards, relative to Immigration History, since 2005. But the meaning of migration did not change as much in English-language popular discourse or in all scholarly languages. In American English usage, for example, migration still refers to domestic or internal moves or it positions migrants as temporary or seasonal, foreign-born migrant workers, especially in agriculture. Many European languages differentiate migration as a movement of laborers from movements of refugees. In one view, migrants seek economic advantage at the expense of autochthonous workers, while refugees deserve support and protections. Alternatively, refugees are a burden and migrants are contributors to a nation's economy. The binary of

migrant/refugee is a powerful one, and the United Nations High Commission on Refugees has insisted on it, claiming that "The two terms have distinct and different meanings, and confusing them leads to problems for both populations" (UNHCR 2016).

Language activists, especially in Europe, have increasingly expressed dislike of the term migrant which, some believe, falsely implies that migrants always move voluntarily. Others object because they believe the term migration now carries negative connotations (Ruz 2015), much as the term immigrant did in the American nineteenth century. Worldwide, the politics of conflicting terminologies of mobility have become increasingly bitter, nationalist, xenophobic, and racist in the past decade, with terms such as *clandestino*, *extra-communitario,* and illegal alien becoming popular as heavily restricted border-crossing itself becomes criminalized. Clearly, the battle over words, as Lakoff has framed it, continues apace.

The changing politics of language has not prevented me from continuing to write histories of migration; on the contrary, I devoted the past three years to a collaboration writing a *Cambridge History of Global Migrations*. But it has tempered my once-vigorous advocacy for Migration History. Within my scholarly world of teaching and research, I now often adopt the terminologies and perspectives of a newer scholarly field, Mobility Studies (Sheller, Urry 2006), even while noting with satisfaction the increased adoption of Migration History and Migration Studies within the scholarly world. Faced with the powerful influence of the United Nations on popular terminologies, world historians probably never had any real prospect of broadening the meaning of migration or making it the broadly inclusive term that they advocated.

4. Diaspora and the politics of renaming

A second example of activism begins with my search for a way to analyze migration from an international perspective while focusing on the making of modern nations and the transformation of migrant identities and culture amidst the maelstrom of massive migrations. My efforts culminated in the publication of *Italy's Many Diasporas* – which in the Italian edition received the somewhat predictable title *Emigranti* (Gabaccia 2000, 2003). My adoption of the term diaspora for this book proved controversial, mainly because the politics of scholarly language was driving dramatic changes in the meaning of the term between 1990 and 2010. Although I did not initially view myself as an advocate for Diaspora

Studies, I am now pleased to think I contributed in a small way to its expansion as a scholarly field. Writing about diasporas allowed me to see how differently nation building unfolded in Italy, other European countries, and in North and South America even as migrations originating in Italy linked all these places. In English, but not in Italian, such advocacy has arguably changed the meaning of diaspora outside the scholarly realm, too.

It is worth narrating the story of *Italy's Many Diasporas* for what it reveals about my changing advocacy. In November of 1990, I attended two scholarly meetings in New Orleans. There, I hoped to demonstrate how the histories of migrating Italians might be removed from the methodological nationalism that drove both American Immigration History and Italy's *storia dell'emigrazione*. At the Annual Meeting of the American Studies Association, I spoke at a round table discussion titled *Internationalism and the Working Class in America* just days after presenting a paper to the Annual Meeting of the American Italian Historical Association titled '*For Us There are No Frontiers': Italian Labor Migrants and Internationalism, 1876-1914*. In both, I advocated for a global history of migration and for new terminologies of mobility (labor migration and international proletariat, but not yet diaspora). The New Orleans meetings initiated the Italians Everywhere Project. Across the 1990s, it became a collaboration first with Fraser Ottanelli and Franca Iacovetta and subsequently with Marie Claude Blanc-Chaléard, Loretta Baldassar, and dozens of scholars in Europe, North America, Australia, and Latin America. Together we organized scholarly panels and several conferences between 1996 and 2005 and published four edited volumes between 2000 and 2011 (Gabaccia, Ottanelli 2001; Gabaccia, Iacovetta 2003; Blanc-Chaléard 2007; Baldassar, Gabaccia 2011).

I subsequently published my New Orleans paper in a *festschrift* honoring the Canadian Italianist Robert Harney (Pozzetta, Ramirez 1992); that volume was titled *The Italian Diaspora*. The same year Latin Americanist Samuel Baily (1992) portrayed Agnonesi migrants as a diaspora. If these publications sparked controversy, I never heard about it.

Only in 1993 did I begin to consider diaspora seriously as a possible terminology of mobility. That year, at a conference in the Netherlands (where I presented a paper comparing the global reception of labor migrants from Italy and China–Gabaccia 1997) sociologist Robin Cohen asked whether I had ever thought of Italy's labor migrations as a diaspora. I had not, I responded, and I was not sure it would be a useful undertaking. With hindsight, I know Cohen was likely trying to contextualize his editing of Rudolph J. Vecoli's (1995) entry, *The Italian Diaspora* for Cohen's *Cambridge Survey of World Migration*. It is also possible Cohen was plan-

ning his University College of London Press book series and soliciting manuscripts that might follow on his own treatment of victim, imperial, labor, trade, and other diasporas (Cohen 1997). I doubt Cohen knew of the work of Cultural Studies scholar Pasquale Verdicchio, who was preparing his book (Verdicchio 1997) on Italian nationalism, although Cultural Studies, along with Anthropology, had by the 1990s become important sites for theorizing diaspora (Dufoix 2008: 7).

Ultimately, the appeal of writing *Italy's Many Diasporas* and publishing it in Cohen's series was an opportunity to gain an interdisciplinary readership reaching from History into the Social Sciences and Cultural Studies. My interest in cross-disciplinary work had deep roots. When I wrote that early paper on the American feminist movement, I was still studying Sociology and Anthropology. (I shifted into History in graduate school but opted again to be examined in Anthropology to prepare for field work in Sicily for dissertation research.) Since the 1980s, I had preferred interdisciplinary scholarly conferences– the American Studies Associations (in the U.S., Germany, and Italy) and the (American) Social Science History Association (SSHA). As a member of the SSHA Executive Board, I would encourage the European scholars who initiated the first European Social Science History Conference (ESSHC) in 1996, and I would join the Program on International Migration of the American Social Science Research Council (SSRC).

I remained something of a diaspora skeptic even while writing *Italy's Many Diasporas*. Like other scholars, I recognized the roots of every diaspora in migration, but I ultimately found that diasporic identities among Italy's migrants were established and connections maintained over time not on a national but – until after World War II – on a regional, local, or political and ideological basis. Rogers Brubaker (2005: 1) had no difficulties recognizing my skepticism when he published his critique of what he called the diaspora explosion of the 1990s. Still, many critics of *Italy's Many Diasporas* seemed blind to the skepticism. Some (Luconi 2011) felt Italy's migrants simply did not meet the list of diaspora characteristics Cohen listed: most were not forced away from home, many had no interest in their homeland or returning there. I did not disagree with him, but I also did not view diaspora as an ideal type. Italian scholars from Italy especially objected to my use of the term diaspora for any group other than Jews. Within Cultural Studies many wished to reserve the term for racialized minorities who undoubtedly did experience greater cultural and social marginalization well beyond what white, European migrants confronted. In person, some critics objected to the term diaspora as an American concept, of little use outside the English-speaking world, or as a newly fashionable buzz word, increasingly de-

void of any specific meaning at all.

My immediate response was to refer skeptics to the more theoretical work of Stéphane Dufoix (2003) and Khachig Tölöyan (1991, 1996). Somewhat differently, these two scholars (one a sociologist and the other a specialist in comparative literature) had developed stances toward diaspora that were historically informed, flexible, and focused on awareness of or maintenance of migrants' connection as non-state actors to a far-away homeland, whether or not that homeland was a nation state, and whether or not the migrants advocated for such a state. Their stance seemed closest to my own. I also advocated for Diaspora Studies as providing a capacious, and potentially global, framework for what had been, in fact, a scattering from Italy toward many destinations. As such, diaspora provided opportunities to combine the comparative approaches that historian Nancy Green (1994) has called divergent (comparisons of one group migrating to many places) and linear (comparisons of one group in their homeland and abroad) without abandoning attention to migration networks or migrant subjectivity. Diaspora Studies also opened unique opportunities to examine migration and nation-building in multiple settings, revealing differences among both nations of immigrants and countries that developed other – and often othering – terminologies for migrants working and living on their territories. Diaspora Studies allowed for the study of how such differences mattered to migrants themselves.

As I have continued in the intervening years to try to understand the differing politics of language swirling around diaspora in Italian and English, I have also become a far more willing and articulate advocate for the terminological choice I made in the late 1990s, and I am also in a better position to understand why the politics of language in this case produced differing results in English-and Italian-speaking worlds. Diaspora and *diaspora* have long had quite different histories in the two languages.

Of course, both used the same word, diaspora/*diaspora*, with the same etymological roots in ancient Greek – διασπορά. Diaspora entered most European languages with the translation from Latin of the Bible, notably into Italian (*Bibbia del Malermi* 1471; *La Sacra Bibbia di Diodati* 1607), German (*Lutherbibel* 1534), and English with the 1611 King James translation. For obvious reasons use of the term spread more quickly among newly literate, Bible-reading Protestants in Germany and Britain than among predominantly Catholic populations, like Italy's. In 1694, the OED identified the first non-Biblical use in English of diaspora (referring to the "Presbyters of the Jewish Diaspora, to whom St. Peter wrote", that is, Jews who were Christian converts) while the earliest publications including *diaspora* (and reproduced in the Google Books Italian language cor-

pus) were exclusively in Latin, mainly in the Bible, or appeared in a few vernacular Italian texts in the original Greek.

Although English speakers consistently used diaspora more frequently than Italian, speakers of both languages flexibly used diaspora/*diaspora* for many groups other than Jews. In English, many early references described the flight of the Moravian followers of John Hus, their underground life through the religious wars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, their revival as the *Herrenhüter Brüdergemeinde*, and the formation of Moravian evangelizing societies, called diasporas. The OED dates the first such reference to 1749. Others writing in English did not hesitate to use the term even for non-religious exiles. The Google Books English language corpus includes a diatribe by the American founder of Brown University (Stiles 1794) who disparaged the "little political diaspora of extravagant and self-opinionated philosophers", who preferred Enlightenment reason to Christian faith. English- and German-language religious studies journals of the nineteenth century discussed diasporas of Greeks, Jews, Protestants, Moravians, Muslims, and even Catholics living scattered as migrant minorities. The first use of diaspora in both the "New York Times" (June 3, 1877) and the "London Times" (January 15, 1919) referred to Protestants. Use of the term Jewish diaspora increased in English language publications after 1830 and became more common with the rise of modern Zionism.

In the 1700s and early 1800s, Italian language publications referring to *disapora/diaspore* instead appeared mainly in medical and scientific writings, with *diaspora* used interchangeably in dictionaries and handbooks with *diaspore* or *diaspro*, to mean a mineral, gemstone, or rock that was said to change color, radiate light and sparkle, or to emit loud noises when heated. Only in the 1860s, as Italy became a sovereign nation state, does one begin to find references to Jews and to evangelizing Protestants as diasporas in the Italian-language corpus of Google Books. Italian-language sources, too, contained diverse uses of the term, with references to diasporas of Waldensians and Hebrews as well as to persons born in Naples or Venice who had left home for other parts of Italy or the world. Even emigrated Catholics were occasionally imagined as a *diaspora*. "*Il Divin Salvatore, periodica settimanale romana*" (25 November 1874: 244) labeled German-origin Catholics living in Bulgaria amidst millions of Protestants, Muslims, and non-believers as a *diaspora* bereft of help from their co-religionists. Frequency of use of *diaspora* in Italian publications lagged significantly behind English although references to Jewish, Israeli, or Hebrew diasporas gained, relative to references to other groups, across the twentieth century.

Although Italian speakers possessed at least a modest history of using the

term *diaspora* flexibly, they did not re-purpose the term as they turned their attentions to migrations away from Italy. Instead they began to write about *italiani all'estero*. Italy's government first promoted use of the term in its 1871 census. Its use spread as Italian nationalists began to view the *italiani all'estero* as *colonie* that could assist in building a greater Italy through commerce and consumption (Choate 2008). And there were other alternatives to *diaspora*. Italian speakers had begun discussing *emigrati italiani* already in the 1840s but use of *italiani all'estero* surpassed such references after 1860. A Google NGram of terms in Google Books' corpus of Italian language publications identifies a period of terminological contestation in the two decades bracketing 1900, when use of *emigrati italiani, emigranti italiani,* and *italiani all'estero* all increased rapidly, with *emigranti italiani* briefly challenging the longer-term hegemony of *italiani all'estero*. After 1920, under Mussolini, a newer term, *italiani nel mondo*, came into use while references to both *emigranti italiani* and *emigrati italiani* declined with Fascist suppression of emigration. After World War II, with the rise of guest worker migrations, use of *emigrati italiani* surpassed *emigranti italiani,* but *italiani all'estero* remained by far the most commonly used term for any collectivity of migrants from Italy.

I was well aware of the use of *italiani all'estero* and *italiani nel mondo* while writing *Italy's Many Diasporas,* but I rejected using either as my title. Both terms were closely associated with efforts in Italy to "make Italians." Both constituted nationalist efforts to embrace as Italians migrants whose identities and affiliations seemed, at least to me, uncertain and unsettled until well into the twentieth century. Migration made Italians, at home and abroad, but it also made Argentines, Americans, and Frenchmen. In my view, the scatterings of migrants from Italy migrants faced what David Cook-Martín (2013) later called a state-driven "scramble for citizens" – a competition among Italy, Spain, and Argentina (and also, I might add, the United States) as all sought to gain the loyalties and identifications of millions of migrants as new citizens. One cannot query migrants' changing loyalties, identities, and identifications with states if one chooses a terminology that simply assumes all migrants were already Italians.

It is scarcely surprising that use of the term Italian diaspora increased in English-language publications in the 1990s and early 2000s, while use of *diaspora italiana* saw only a very modest uptick in Italian-language publications. Down to the present *diaspora* remains the least used of the competing terms *italiani all'estero, italiani nel mondo,* and *emigrati italiani*. Italian speakers are still more likely to use the term *italiani nel mondo* – tainted as it is by its association with the Fascist regime – than they are to write about a *diaspora italiana*.

Rejection has not been total, of course: one can point to both publications and university programs in Italy that focus on *la diaspora italiana*, and the term did gain acceptance among younger scholars. Outside the academy, however, use of *diaspora* is still limited.

In any case, I never advocated for a study of a single *diaspora italiana*. The pluralism in the title of *Italy's Many Diasporas* was consciously chosen to advocate for an understanding of migration and nation-building that allowed for many possible outcomes. *Italy's Many Diasporas* explicitly argued for the existence of many diasporas because the strongest connections and identifications I found among migrants were rooted not in a homogenous Italian nation or in the Italian state but rather in hundreds of local places and in hundreds of local and regional dialects. The book traced conditions outside Italy where many national identities (American, Italian, hyphenated, Argentine) did – or did not – develop among migrants. Identities rooted in specific Italian places have persisted outside Italy, and have been reproduced across generations, even among descendants of the migrants who speak only French, English, or Spanish. In that sense, *Italy's Many Diasporas* argued for a new understanding of diasporic cultures and identities that existed outside Italy, were rooted in migrant experience, and (often, especially before World War II) were connected only tenuously to Italy as a national state or, at times, even to a modern Italian language or culture. My book was meant to be a demonstration of how Italy, Italy's history, and the Italian state appear when viewed from outside. It advocated for an understanding of Italy that was international and transnational and rooted in the loyalties and identities of the millions who had departed from Italy without strong national affiliations, and who did not always forget where – in very local places – their journeys had begun. Diasporic cultures were not Italian culture re-located but merely shared its origins in a place called Italy.

Italy's Many Diasporas contributed to the renaming of scholarly fields formerly understood to be histories of emigration or immigration. It reflected my desire to instead write histories of migration. In his book *No Friend but the Mountains*, the Kurdish Iranian journalist Behrouz Boochani (2018) recounts the horrific journeys he traveled, along with many others, in search of refuge – first in Indonesia, then in the Antipodes. While Australians viewed Boochani as living at a neutrally defined "off-shore detention centre" on the island called Manus (Papua New Guinea), Boochani changed the world's perspective on Australia and on his own life by renaming Manus as a prison island.

Of course, the renaming of *gli italiani nel mondo* or *italiani all'estero* as multiple village- and regionally based diasporas in which Italians, or Frenchmen, or

Americans might become members of several modern nations is not as morally dramatic as Boochani's story. What it does however is to focus attention on the exceptionally broad migratory scatterings that have characterized Italy's history rather than exploring them in national fragments. It foregrounds the identities of non-state actors, their social relationships to each other, and their changing identifications with the many nation states seeking to claim them as emigrants, immigrants, or citizens.

If the book encouraged little terminological change among Italian speakers, it did contribute to a more successful collective action that has changed the English language. Twenty years after the publication of *Italy's Many Diasporas,* it is satisfying to report that the *OED* has revised its entry on diaspora. In 2008, the online *OED* gave only two meanings for diaspora, pointing first to the Biblical origins of descriptions of Hellenic Jews and of Jews converted to Christianity living outside their homelands and, secondarily, to diaspora's association with missionary Mennonites living in foreign lands. Examine the *OED* online today and you will find more diverse references to early use of diaspora and also a new meaning that acknowledges the use of diaspora for "any group of people who have spread or become dispersed beyond their traditional homeland or point of origin." The OED notes that diaspora can also mean the space or geography such groups inhabit. It cites a 1924 source claiming "there have been many diasporas or dispersions in the world's history" – an assertion that any global or world historian can applaud. Finally, the *OED* describes a third meaning of diaspora that emphasizes the condition or experience of living "in diaspora" as an important use of the term dating back to the nineteenth century. Migrants from Italy lived in many diasporas, not in one diaspora.

In a very small way, I believe I contributed to the OED's re-thinking of the meaning and use of diaspora. I am proud to acknowledge my research and writing about Italy's many diasporas as a form of activism and as an intervention in the politics of language. Collective scholarly action has produced a field of Diaspora Studies that is broadly and flexibly conceived and that has moved scholarship beyond the methodological nationalism with which I did battle in the 1970s and 1980s. Even more, I believe, the growing use of diaspora in popular and scholarly contexts reflects the fact that diasporas need not be national in their orientations any more than they must be tools of nation states. In that sense the plural, diasporas, encapsulates many of the complexities of a globalized and mobile world in which Italy and Italian culture has a place but must coexist with the diasporas they launched.

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Abstract
My book Italy's *Many Diasporas: Elites, Exiles, and Workers of the World* (2000) experienced a subtle change as it became an Einaudi edition titled, *Emigranti: Le diaspore degli italiani dal Medioevo a oggi* (2003). During the intervening twenty years I have tracked and puzzled over the uneven uptake of "diaspora" in multi-disciplinary and multi-lingual scholarship. And I have increasingly focused my scholarly attentions on what I now call "terminologies of mobility". To write of diaspore, diasporas, emigranti, or migrants are overlapping but distinctive undertakings. Words do matter and I now see terminologies of mobility as sites of contestation over power and voice within both scholarship and everyday language.
In no language or scholarly discipline are people "on the move" analyzed through a single term with a universally understood and shared meaning. On the contrary, each discipline and language generates and deploys clusters of terms. These are never exactly equivalent within a single language and their translations always shed meaning as words travel.
In this paper I will reflect on terminologies of mobility that have mattered in the multilingual scholarship on migrations into, out, of and around and within Italy. I use both etymological excursions and large digital archives of scholarly and popular usage to identify and begin to describe power contestations over such terminologies. Words ultimately do matter and we better understand the production of knowledge when we take into conflicts over terminologies and their meanings across disciplines and languages.

Il titolo del libro (*Italy's Many Diasporas: Elites, Exiles, and Workers of the World*, 2000) ha subìto un sottile cambiamento con la traduzione italiana: *Emigranti: Le diaspore degli italiani dal Medioevo a oggi* (Einaudi, 2003). Durante i venti anni successivi l'autrice ha seguito con interesse l'adozione irregolare della terminologia della diaspora nella ricerca multidisciplinare e multilingue. Ha sempre più concentrato gli interessi scientifici su quella che definisce "terminologie della mobilità". Scrivere di diaspore, *diasporas*, emigranti o migranti sono scelte che si sovrappongono ma si distinguono.
Le parole hanno un peso e l'autrice oggi intende le terminologie della mobilità come luoghi di contestazione del potere e della voce sia nell'ambito della ricerca che nel linguaggio quotidiano. In nessuna lingua o disciplina scientifica le persone "in movimento" sono analizzate attraverso un unico termine con un significato universalmente compreso e condiviso. Al contrario, ogni disciplina e lingua genera e utilizza gruppi di termini. Questi non sono mai esattamente equivalenti all'interno di una stessa lingua e le loro traduzioni perdono sempre significato man mano che le parole viaggiano.
In questo articolo si riflette sulle terminologie della mobilità che hanno avuto importanza nella ricerca multilingue sulle migrazioni dentro, fuori, attorno e all'interno dell'Italia. Ci si avvale di escursioni etimologiche e di grandi archivi digitali degli usi scientifici e popolari per identificare e iniziare a descrivere le contestazioni di potere su tali terminologie. Le parole, infine, contano e si comprende meglio la produzione della conoscenza quando si prendono in considerazione i conflitti sulle terminologie e i loro significati attraverso le discipline e le lingue.

Key words: Diaspora, immigration, migration, historiography, terminologies.
Parole chiave: Diaspora, immigrazione, migrazione, storiografia, terminologie.