

# Remapping Cityscapes: Postcolonial Diasporas and Representations of Urban Space in Contemporary Italian Literature

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Key words: *Postcolonial Italian writers, Representation of urban space, Intersection of race, gender, and citizenship*

Analyzing the notion of place and the articulation of space and power in colonial contexts, Bill Ashcroft points out that the colonial “obsession” with maps is the expression of the colonizers’ anxiety to control conquered land. The map offers a visual image of a territory, and the common etymology of the Greek verbs “to see” and “to know” suggests that to be able to see is in fact to be able to know, and therefore to control (Ashcroft, 2001, p. 131). In order for European colonial powers to be able to dominate space, however, the mere act of beholding is not sufficient and must be followed by the act of writing over. The colonizer employs written language to erase the language of the colonized and leave his mark instead, in a process in which colonial territories are transformed from “inhabited places” into “empty spaces” and then into newly “inhabited places” (Ashcroft, 2001, p. 132)<sup>1</sup>. Through the re-textualization of geography as spatial reality, imperial powers “announce discursive control” (Ashcroft, 2001, p. 134) over space and re-signify it. Maps then are a necessary first step to exercise the power of surveillance over a territory, as they make territories accessible as texts.

If the necessity to impose control and surveillance over colonized countries was central in colonial Empires, at the time of postcolonial and global migrations this necessity travels together with migrants to the heart of Fortress Europe. Here national states exercise what Henri Lefebvre considers one of the main functions of the modern state, “the organization of space, the regularization of its flows, and the control of its networks” (1991, p. 383) and they extend their control and surveillance to the spaces migrants come to occupy<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Ashcroft defines “place” as “a process intimately bound up with the culture and the identity of its inhabitants” not just a fixed location, rather “a *result* of habitation, a consequence of the ways in which people inhabit space, particularly that conception of space as universal and uncontested that is constructed for them by imperial discourse” (2001, p. 156).

<sup>2</sup> Significant examples here are the harassment of street vendors by the police once they become legal immigrants, as recounted by Pap Khouma in *Io venditore di elefanti* (1990,

In this article, I will examine how second-generation writers such as Igiaba Scego and Uxax Cristina Ali Farah represent the social changes that postcolonial Italy is undergoing. Specifically, I will show how, by populating their narratives and cityscapes with migrant and second-generation characters who do not conform to traditional representations of migrants as undesired subjects, these authors defy the ways in which migrant and postcolonial subjects are conventionally configured. By remapping urban spaces as loci of cultural signification in contemporary lives and questioning traditional articulations of power in urban environments, second-generation writers and artists defy representations of the Italian population as homogeneous and of migrants as dangerous and/or victimized subjects deprived of agency. The process of remapping local space, which in turn leads to a remapping of national space, encompasses issues of gender, race, postcoloniality, citizenship, and belonging. Second generations radically question the idea of Italian citizenship being attributed on the base of the biological principle of the *jus sanguinis* and suggest instead “new ways of being Italian, whether by virtue of being born in Italy, through everyday experiences and practices, or through participation in the educational system and a dynamic use of the national language” (Lombardi-Diop, Romeo, 2012, p. 10). These new ways of being Italian also include how urban space is occupied and they strongly affect the construction of an Italian national identity.

As Pap Khouma (1995) states in an interview with Graziella Parati, writing *Io venditore di elefanti* (1990) was for him a way of talking back to the legal system and to media representations, which associated migrants with a state of emergency and undesirability. If we move our analysis to migrant women, the two over-represented categories both in legal texts and in the media in Italy have long been domestic collaborators and caregivers on the one hand and sex-workers on the other. A combination of market laws and state regulation of its flows has given migrant women a (relatively) easy access to professions such as maids, nannies, and caregivers – a transnational, globalized version of the “angel in the house” – and sex-workers – its hypersexualized opposite. Interestingly, Barbara Ehrenreich and Arlie Russell Hochschild see the positions that migrant women occupy as connected – rather than opposite – to one another since they provide domestic households with different kinds of love and its surrogates, which seem to have become increasingly lacking in wealthy countries around the world (2002, pp. 4-5). The inefficiency of the Italian health-care system and the ageing of the Italian population in the past thirty years have created a great need for assistance at home for a large number of disabled and elderly people. In a sexist country like Italy, which is very conservative when it comes to gender roles (and in numerous other ways as well), an intersectional approach is necessary to analyze how Italian women have

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republished by Baldini Castoldi Dalai in 2006), and the *sanatoria* instituted for domestic collaborators – *colf* and *badanti* – with the Bossi-Fini law in 2002, which further confined migrant women to private spaces.

gained more access to public space not as the result of a major redistribution of housework between men and women, but rather at the expense of immigrant women who have taken on their domestic roles.

The characters that populate Igiaba Scego and Ubax Cristina Ali Farah's narratives radically question traditional representations of migrant women as stifled in the roles of caregivers and sex workers, victimized and deprived of agency. Scego's novel *Rhoda* (2004) is centered, somewhat conventionally, on these roles and it depicts, again somewhat conventionally, the downfall and death of a black woman who is taken to Rome from Somalia and whose uprooting can be considered as the main cause of her becoming a sex worker, contracting AIDS, and ultimately dying. This text, however, also explores diasporic roles and places, complicating the act of migrating and combining notions of gender and diaspora with the interaction between individual subjects and community, private and public spaces, natives and migrants, colonial domination and postcolonial resistance. The narrative presents Aisha as a Somali Italian woman who, unlike her sister Rhoda, has been able to construct a sense of belonging in her country of arrival. The urban spaces of Naples and Rome do not simply constitute the background against which the story unfolds: rather, they are remapped by the characters' everyday lives. If the national idea of "italianità" is absent from the novel, there is a strong presence of local "romanità". The novel opens in Rome where one of the main characters, Aisha, goes to a hairdresser located "in una via anonima dedicata a un condottiero anonimo di qualche guerra di sicuro inutile" ("in an anonymous street dedicated to an anonymous leader of some surely useless war") (Scego, 2004, p. 7). The city of Rome is soon juxtaposed to Naples, the image of which opens the second chapter: "Napoli quella sera non respirava nonostante il mare" ("Naples that night did not breathe, in spite of the sea") (Scego, 2004, p. 12). If the mention of the Mediterranean Sea immediately reminds the reader of the thousands of migrants who have lost their lives over the years in trying to reach the coasts of Southern Europe mainly from Africa, the reference to illegal immigrants and the fact that the Mediterranean constitutes a space of connection and disconnection between the two continents is soon made explicit:

La città quella sera era coperta da uno strato spesso di polvere. Una polverina giallastra che provocava allergie, paura, diffidenza, angoscia e pettegolezzo. La TV diceva che era sabbia del deserto, la TV diceva pure che proveniva dall'Africa come i clandestini che sbarcavano ormai giornalmente sulle coste italiane. La TV però spesso mentiva. O meglio, ometteva.

Forse quella polverina era solo il simbolo del degrado di una nazione e, chissà, del mondo intero.

Era il simbolo dell'incomprensione globale<sup>3</sup> (Scego, 2004, p. 15).

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<sup>3</sup> Trad.: "The city that night was covered by a thick layer of dust. A yellowish dust that caused allergies, fear, mistrust, anguish and gossip. TV said it was desert sand, TV also said it came from Africa, like the illegal immigrants who landed now every day on the Italian coasts. TV

If the degradation that comes from Africa, symbolically represented as desert sand, is associated with the presence of migrants, the heat and the dust of the city are soon connected to the hypersexualized image of African sex workers, the only ones to walk the streets in those unfavorable climatic conditions. Coupled with the depiction of Naples as a land of perdition is the frequent association of the city with a generic southern elsewhere, when in the text the city is called a “brutal forest” (“selva brutale”, p. 57) and a “Neapolitan jungle” (“giungla napoletana”, p. 59). Creating images that remind the reader of the colonizers’ process of remapping conquered territories by essentializing their wildness and by disavowing the presence of the native human inhabitants, Scego here reinforces an orientalizing notion both of Africa and of Southern Italy<sup>4</sup>.

The representation of Rome in the novel shows a greater complexity. When Rome is seen through the eyes of Aisha, the most Roman of the characters in the book and the author’s *alter ego*, streets, squares, parks, stores, bus lines, subway stations, and neighborhoods map a geography of everyday life and make the city a tangible reality where ordinary lives unfold. The centrality of the city’s global dimension is crucial from a critical standpoint. As Isabella Clough Marinaro and Bjørn Thomassen have recently argued, Rome is generally marginalized in the field of global studies that focuses on economic analysis. However, it must be considered as a global city from different perspectives, as it is “a hub for global diplomacy [...], immigration, religious pilgrimage and tourism, and it is one of the world’s most known and ‘imagined cities’, playing a central role in cinema and popular literature around the globe” (2014, p. 3). In the novel, Rome is not represented as an international icon of history and art, but rather as a center for global migrations whose geography is constantly being remapped by migrant and postcolonial subjects and their everyday practices.

Barni (Aisha and Rhoda’s aunt) and her friend Faduma share with Rhoda a strong sense of displacement, provoked not only by their distance from their motherland, but also by their confinement to the enclosed space of domestic work in their country of arrival. Their strong connection to the Somali community, however, creates in them a sense of what I would call a “rooted displacement” that allows for hope and female empowerment: at the end of the novel Barni and Faduma open an “ethnic” (Scego, 2004, p. 185) store they name “Rhoda” in the Roman neighborhood of Primavalle, where Barni and Aisha live. By becoming entrepreneurs in their own multicultural neighborhood, the two Somali women create a stronger connection with

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often lied, though. More precisely, it omitted. Maybe that dust was only the symbol of the degradation of a nation, maybe of the entire world. It was the symbol of global incomprehension”.

<sup>4</sup> For a compelling analysis of Southern Italy as the internal “other” and of the orientalizing representations through which this subalternity has been constructed, and for a parallel between the construction of the Orient and the South, see, among others, Verdichio, 1997; Schneider, 1998; Brunetti and Derobertis, 2009.

their city of adoption whose geography they contribute to remap. If achieving upward mobility through the marriage to an Italian man – as is the case for Faduma’s friend Nura Hussein – does not ignite any process of self-empowerment, Barni and Faduma instead change their social status by establishing an affiliation and a coalition among native and immigrant women (the actual store is offered to them by Sandra, an Italian friend of Rhoda’s). This portrays a phenomenon actually spreading in Italy. Unlike Somali women who sell their products from home, Barni and Faduma open a store in the multiethnic neighborhood of Primavalle, where Barni feels most at ease because of the many “colored faces” (Scego, 2004, p. 154) who populate that part of Rome. Here the sign “Rhoda” shines like a star and testifies to the presence of Somali women in the entrepreneurial space of Rome, for whom it demands respect (p. 185). This move from the domestic to the public space of the city marks an important shift from invisibility to visibility, and therefore to the entitlement of symbolically and physically occupying a certain space. The question of visibility, as Jacqueline Andall points out, is crucial in the initial period of Italian immigration, since it was the immigrants’ visibility, not their actual arrival or presence, which ignited hostility in local population. The migration of Black and Asian women in the 1970s and 1980s had not created resistance because their employment in Italian households had made them invisible. When migrants became street vendors, their presence in public rather than domestic spaces created visibility, which in turn ignited hostility (Andall, 2002, p. 398). No longer working as domestic caregivers and refusing to sell their products from home, Barni and Faduma abandon the domestic space where they were invisible to the larger world. Thus, they inscribe their mark on the cityscape they have come to inhabit and remap its geography.

If the colonial dichotomy center/periphery is problematized in Igiaba Scego’s *Rhoda* through her remapping of urban space, the same dichotomy is present in a central scene of Uxax Cristina Ali Farah’s novel *Madre piccola* (2007). Here Barni, one of the two Somali female protagonists in the novel, makes her way to the Capitoline Hill to attend the funeral of a group of Somali people who have drowned in the Mediterranean while trying to escape from war. As Barni climbs the Capitoline Hill, she experiences dizziness and resistance. The harder she tries to reach the center, the more she is pulled towards the periphery: “Era come una forza centrifuga che mi spingeva fuori. Io cerco di procedere verso il centro [...]” (Ali Farah, 2007, p. 15). The colonial dichotomy center/periphery is rearticulated here according to an official spatiality of power, that allows these (ex-)colonized Somali people to be at the center of the former empire and celebrated by its institutions only because they are dead, while Barni feels pulled out towards the periphery just like these dead Somalis would be if they had survived the crossing and found themselves in Italy as illegal immigrants. The dichotomy is further articulated – showing how the notions of center and margin shift in time – when one of the official voices delivering a commemorative speech

reminds Italian people of the times when they were forced to escape from desperate conditions and migrate in search of prosperity. The connections between Italian immigration and emigration, which, as Clarissa Clò argues “are not missed by second generations themselves” (2012, p. 277), are crucial to understand how the intersection of different diasporas influences the process of formation of Italian national identity.

If migrants are the protagonists of *Madre piccola* – although the end of the novel announces the imminent birth of a second generation – it is second generations who remap Roman urban space in Ali Farah’s short story “Rapdipunt” (2004) and second novel *Il comandante del fiume* (2014). The narrator of “Rapdipunt” is a teenage girl who joins an all-male youth group of African descent known in the 1980s as the “Flaminio Maphia” from the location of their gatherings, the subway station of Piazzale Flaminio. The explicit mention of a number of urban landmarks (Pincio and the Botanical Gardens in Trastevere), the fact that the members of the group reside in a squat, and the male protagonist’s use of the Roman dialect portray the familiarity of second generations with the urban space they inhabit and their rootedness in their social environment. At the same time, their loitering in transitional spaces such as stations (Flaminio and Piramide subway stations, Termini central station, train station to Ostia) hints at the restlessness of the group as connected to both their age and their feelings of displacement and non-belonging.

The narrator represents the moral authority in the story. She is Somali Italian like Mauro, the main male character to whom she is attracted, and she is aware and critical of the fact that the young men in the group are looked at with diffidence and constructed as dangerous in the urban space or Rome because they do not conform to the Italian “chromatic norm” (Romeo, 2012, p. 225). At the same time, unlike the men in the group, she is not easily seduced by easy glorifications of transnational blackness embodied by black young men who come from other countries where, they claim, black people are respected. The young men of Piazzale Flaminio listen to them carefully because they think that they must be the depositary of some “traditional” African knowledge (Ali Farah, 2006, p. 278). The narrator is also aware of the necessity to consider different, intersecting oppressions by exposing the sexism of the young men in the group, who, without self-questioning, construct a reverse mirror-image of the colonial imaginary of the female body by equating white women with sexual objects, while they reduce black women to the embodiment of “African” tradition and culture. The main character also criticizes these young men’s resistance to the productivity of a middle-class life: they do not go to school or work, and the money they spend is taken from what their mothers earn as domestic workers. She implicitly questions systems of neocolonial exploitation of Black women in Italy, but also the exploitation occurring within the Black community, which is grounded in gender dynamics. Significantly, as the dedication states,

[t]his monologue is dedicated to the mothers of these young men. They arrived with the first waves of immigrants in the Sixties and Seventies. They were forced, out of necessity, to work as maids while their children grew up in institutional care (Ali Farah, 2006, p. 276)<sup>5</sup>.

By referring to the first waves of migrants who reached Italy from Italian ex-colonies in the Horn of Africa in the 1960s and 1970s, Ali Farah also implicitly denounces Italian colonialism and the continuing exploitation of colonized subjects both during colonization (in their own countries) and after colonization (in contemporary postcolonial Italy).

References to Italian colonialism in Somalia, Italian Trusteeship Administration, civil war and the Somali diaspora that these historical events have produced are ubiquitous in Ali Farah's novels *Madre piccola* and *Il comandante del fiume*. Ali Farah's second novel can be read as a *Bildungsroman*, the protagonist of which is Yabar, a second-generation Somali Italian teen-age boy who is struggling to construct his own identity. This effort is not articulated around traditional dichotomies that oppose past and present, Somalia and Italy, but rather, it is complicated by the intersection of these elements with Yabar's father withdrawal from their family to become a military leader of the civil war; Yabar's mother's rejection of the clannish structure of Somali society, which tends to reproduce itself also in diasporic communities around the world (as is the case for London in the novel); her further criticism of traditional family based on clannish divisions through her choice to constitute an elective family founded on common beliefs rather than blood ties with Rosa and Sissi, another Somali Italian woman and her daughter; different articulations of the African diaspora and the hypocrisy inherent in keeping alive "authentic" Somali communities; (self-) ghettoization of Somali communities around the world; the institutional rejection of blackness from the (presumed) white national body; Yabar's contempt for pan-Africanism as embodied by the Black community encountered in Rome and their uncritical feelings of brotherhood.

The continuity between *Il comandante del fiume* and "Rapdipunt" is evident in the perspective adopted in the narration, once again assigned to a second-generation Somali Italian teenager, and also in the presence of the Black community of Piazzale Flaminio in both texts. *Il comandante del fiume* strongly resonates with some of the urban atmospheres of "Rapdipunt": the river of the title – which is also the river in the legend that

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<sup>5</sup> This dedication is quoted from the English translation of the short story, "Punt Rap" (Ali Farah, 2006). It was originally present in the first version of the short story, which Uba Cristina Ali Farah wrote as a monologue for actress Cristina Deregibus. It was staged at the Teatro Vascello in Rome in February 2005 as part of the show *Autori per Roma*, theatrical short stories directed by Pierpaolo Palladino (this information was provided to me by the author in an email conversation on July 9, 2015). For reasons that the author cannot recall, the dedication was expunged from both Italian versions of the short story (Ali Farah 2004; 2005). The dedication however, as stated before, reappears in the English translation of the short story.

functions as a red thread in the novel – becomes the Tiber in contemporary Rome, a pulsing vein which provides vital lymph to everyday life. In the second chapter, the Tiber is the undisputed central character and is depicted as a living being: “Sento il respiro del fiume intorno all’isola” (“I can feel the river breathe around the island”) (Ali Farah, 2014, p. 12). Here Yabar observes “i veri abitanti del fiume” (“the true inhabitants of the river”) (Ali Farah, 2014, p. 22), a community of marginalized homeless people to whose alienation Yabar feels attracted and which he somehow shares – although in different ways and for different reasons. It is along the Tiber’s banks that Rosa and Sissi jog and the threshold between Italy and Africa becomes thinner when Yabar equates them to gazelles running in the savannah: “Ma questa non è la savanna, siamo a Roma, questo è il Tevere, lì c’è il gazometro [...]” (“But this is not the savannah, we are in Rome, this is the Tiber, the Gazometro is there [...]”) (Ali Farah, 2014, pp. 37-38). The hospital from where Yabar tells the story is located on the Tiber Island. The river of the legend and the Tiber confer unity and meaning to lives both in the legend and in the urban environment of the novel.

As already observed for “Rapdipunt” and even more deeply than in this short story, second generations’ feelings of belonging are very much connected to the local dimension of the city, its locations, its dialect. The diffidence towards a transnational connection with other Black subjects around the world, voiced by the main character in “Rapdipunt”, “is here stated by Yabar, who is suspicious of people who call him “brother” only because they share the same skin color. Yabar is also very diffident of the Somali community in London, where the protagonist spends some time with his extended family and where he becomes aware of his father’s and his own story. In Rome his mother has severed their connection with the Somali community and perhaps also for this reason he feels attracted to the Somali community in London, which allows him to uncover some ties with his past. However, Yabar also observes how the Somali community in London is divided into clans and ghettoized by British society, while second generations entertain a relationship with their land of origin apparently closer than his, but in reality only more hypocritical. These feelings of diffidence have the effect of producing in Yabar a reinforcement of his sense of belonging to the Roman urban environment, which culminates, at the end of the novel, in his stating that, “Roma è la nostra città” (“Rome is our city”) (Ali Farah, 2014, p. 204).

Contrary to what occurs in “Rapdipunt”, the places mentioned in the novel map a “cartography of diaspora” (Brah, 1996) that includes not only transitional locations like stations, but also other places directly connected to the Somali diaspora, such as agencies created to facilitate money transfers to Somalia and call centers. A call center is the site of one of the most moving scenes in *Il comandante del fiume*. Yabar accompanies Libaan – a Somali Italian youth he has just met – to make a telephone call to his mother. At the age of ten, Libaan had gone to Italy with his father, who had then left him in



institutional care and disappeared. Many years later, Libaan had tried to call his mother but he could no longer speak Somali, and his mother did not speak Italian. Libaan asks Yabar to be the intermediary in communicating with his mother. This is the scene where Yabar, reluctant at first, ends up feeling closest to his past and connected to his land of origin, when his desire mixed with fear transforms itself into language and he hears Somali pour out of this mouth, an ability he thought he no longer possessed<sup>6</sup>.

The protagonist's feeling of belonging is articulated in the tension between a local present and a transnational past, while the national dimension is utterly absent – or, when present, conflictual. This can be read as second generations' reaction to national policies which confer citizenship on the base of biology (*jus sanguinis*) rather than place of birth (*jus soli*) and residence, and which exclude second generations from the national body – or slowly includes them with great difficulty. The legal aspect is also combined with the utter inability of Italian institutions to consider the intersection of blackness and Italianness as a viable one. In the scene of Yabar's return to Rome, airport officials are unable to mentally process the fact of Yabar's Italian citizenship, even when presented with his Italian passport, because of his lack of conformity to the – presumed – Italian "somatic norm" (Puwar, 2004, p. 1). If in "Rapdipunt" the group's blackness is perceived as dangerous and creates tension in an urban space constructed as homogeneously white, this kind of tension and rejection is taken to an institutional level in *Il comandante del fiume*. The scene at the airport stages how Italian identity as based on descent is defended by the institutions and how Italy is resistant to the inclusion – here not just symbolic but also physical – of migrants and second generations into her national body.

Both Rome and the process of mapping and remapping colonial and postcolonial space are central in Igiaba Scego's *La mia casa è dove sono* (2010). All the chapters in the book, with the exception of the first and the last one, are titled after specific locations in the city of Rome (Teatro Sistina, Piazza di Santa Maria sopra Minerva, Stele di Axum, Stazione Termini, Trastevere, Stadio Olimpico). These places are intended as a response to the first chapter, in which the protagonist and some members of her family draw a map of Mogadishu – from which they have escaped many years back and to which they cannot return – to prevent the memories of their city from vanishing from their minds. To this city of paper, this collection of memories, the author juxtaposes a tangible city: she selects locations that are crucial both for her history and the history of her family and analyzes the cultural relevance of these places in Italian colonial and postcolonial history. As Nicola Labanca states, "è negli elenchi stradali italiani che permane il ricordo – altrove rimosso – delle imprese coloniali dell'Italia unita: una piazza Adua, un corso Tripoli o una via Mogadiscio, sono frequenti nella toponomastica

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<sup>6</sup> See p. 126.

non immemore delle nostre città” (2002, p. 7)<sup>7</sup>. Both Mogadishu and Rome in the novel are mapped according to colonial topographies and Italian colonial history resurfaces to reveal a national amnesia.

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Literature produced by second-generation writers in Italy contributes to a remapping of cityscapes and promotes a new understanding of the changes Italian cities are undergoing as a result of contemporary transnational diasporic movements. Contemporary cities become subversive sites in which processes of cultural signification are redefined by new cultural actors who no longer accept to be stifled in stereotypical, victimized roles, but who claim their belonging to the city – and by extension to the nation – thus questioning traditional constructions of Italian national identity.

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<sup>7</sup> Trad.: “it is in Italian street directories that memories of Italian colonial enterprise persist which have been otherwise removed: piazza Adua, corso Tripoli or via Mogadiscio are frequent in the unoblivious toponimies of our cities”.

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*Nuove mappature urbane.  
Diaspore postcoloniali e rappresentazioni spaziali  
nella letteratura italiana contemporanea*

Nel presente saggio esamino le modalità attraverso cui scrittrici di seconda generazione come Igiaba Scego e Ubax Cristina Ali Farah rappresentano i cambiamenti sociali che avvengono quotidianamente nell'Italia postcoloniale attraverso nuove articolazioni spaziali. Queste autrici propongono nuove rappresentazioni di soggetti migranti e postcoloniali, e lo fanno popolando le proprie narrazioni e i paesaggi urbani in cui tali narrazioni si articolano con personaggi migranti e di seconda generazione che non sono in alcun modo conformi al modello di indesiderabilità attraverso cui questi soggetti sono tradizionalmente rappresentati. Attraverso una rimappatura degli spazi urbani come luoghi di significazione culturale e una messa in discussione delle tradizionali articolazioni del potere in ambienti urbani e metropolitani, scrittrici e scrittori di seconda generazione decostruiscono le rappresentazioni della popolazione italiana come omogenea e dei migranti come soggetti pericolosi e/o vittimizzati, assolutamente privi di *agency*. In questo processo di rimappatura dello spazio locale, che conduce ad una rimappatura anche dello spazio nazionale, si intersecano questioni di genere, razza, postcolonialità, cittadinanza e appartenenza. Le seconde generazioni mettono radicalmente in discussione il principio dello *ius sanguinis*, secondo il quale la cittadinanza viene attribuita in base a caratteristiche di tipo biologico, e suggeriscono invece nuovi modi di essere italiani che includono la partecipazione attiva alla vita di un paese, la reiterazione delle pratiche quotidiane, e nuovi modi di occupare gli spazi urbani. Ciò influenza fortemente la costruzione del senso di italianità e di identità nazionale italiana.

*Nouvelles recartographisations urbaines.  
Diaspores postcoloniales et représentations spatiales  
dans la littérature contemporaine italienne*

Dans cet essai, j'examine les modalités adoptées par des écrivains de deuxième génération, telles que Igiaba Scego et Ubax Cristina Ailes Farah, pour la représentation des changements sociaux qui se produisent quotidiennement dans l'Italie postcoloniale par rapport aux nouvelles articulations spatiales. Ces auteurs proposent de nouvelles représentations des sujets migrants et postcoloniaux, et ils le font en peuplant leurs narrations (et les paysages urbains où ces récits s'insèrent) avec des personnages migrants de deuxième génération qui ne s'accordent pas au modèle d'«indésiderabilité» à travers lequel ils sont représentés d'ordinaire. En utilisant une recartographisation des espaces urbains en tant que lieux riches de signification culturelle et une mise en question des articulations traditionnelles du pouvoir dans les milieux métropolitains, les écrivains de deuxième génération démontent les représentations qui présentent la population italienne comme homogène et les migrants comme sujets e/o victimes dangereux, tout à fait dépourvus d'*agency*. Dans ce procès de recartographisation de l'espace local, qui s'étend aussi à l'espace national, il s'entrecroisent des problèmes concernant le genre, la race, la postcolonialité, la population et l'appartenance. Les deuxièmes générations mettent radicalement en discussion le principe de l'*ius sanguinis* selon lequel la nationalité est attribué en raison de prétendues caractéristiques biologiques,

et elles suggèrent de nouvelles manières d'être italiens, incluant la participation active à la vie d'un pays, la répétition des usages quotidiens, et de nouvelles façons d'occuper les espaces urbaines, ce qui influence profondément la construction du sens d'«italianité» et d'identité nationale italienne.