

Gabriele Proglia and Laura Odasso, eds.

Border Lampedusa: Subjectivity, Visibility and Memory in Stories of Sea and Land
London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2018, pp. 190, \$109.99.

Since the mid-2000s the island of Lampedusa, located 180 miles from the harbor-town of Zuwārah, in Libya, has been the primary destination of Black migrants starting their journey from North, East and Sub-Saharan Africa, crossing areas of the Sahara and passing through Libya to find a boat passage to Europe. The stretch of water separating Zuwārah and Lampedusa has become a visual spectacle of rescue operations and death at sea. Overall, it is estimated that, since 1988, over 27,000 people have died along the Mediterranean frontiers of Europe, 5,143 only in 2016 (International Organization for Migration 2019). This geo-political predicament has spotlighted Lampedusa, turning the island into an object of study for anyone interested in contemporary migratory movements in the Mediterranean and the attendant production of forms of governmentality, securitization, and border biopolitics. For many activists, journalists, and scholars, Lampedusa has come to represent the violent and often deadly consequences of Fortress Europe's closed-door policies. The volume *Border Lampedusa* takes stock of this situation, making Lampedusa central for a critique of border policing and immigration law enforcement policies and a critical assessment of the deadly consequences of such policies, as well as the representation by the media, the institutions, and the migrants themselves.

The volume comprises a total of eleven chapters, divided in two sections («Subjective and Embodied Experiences» and «Visibility and Memories»). Taking the island as its starting point, it covers a wide range of thematic areas. From these, two overlapping topics emerge. The first deals with the formation of migrant subjective memories and its relation to both the colonial archive and its postcolonial memorialization (Giuliani, Deluigi, Ponzanesi, Proglia, Mazzara). The second treats migrant bodies and affectivity in their relation to official forms of mourning (Wright, Budge, Gatta, Giubilaro, Dubosc). I will take into consideration these two thematic areas by examining each single chapter and its contribution to the overarching topic identified above.

Gaia Giuliani's chapter investigates the discursive formations of the Southern European borderscape in relation to hegemonic national and supranational archives, identifying Lampedusa as an ideal stage, «both a proscenium and a gateway» (p. 72), «where a number of power relations, imaginaries, and stories (individual and collective) are continuously rehearsed and modified» (p. 70). The theatrical and spatial metaphor provides the author with an analytical framework for an intersectional approach to class, race, and gender within Italy's sedimented colonial archive and its contemporary, European reproduction. Rosita Deluigi's chapter expands on the visual rendition of the tragedies at sea

through her commentary on a series of photographic shots taken by the author on the island of Lampedusa in July 2013. Locations included in the shots are the public sculpture titled «The Lampedusa Gate», and the Cemetery of Boats, two of the most iconic migration memorials found in Lampedusa. Deluigi interprets such public locations as occasions for reflection on the meaning of witnessing large-scale suffering. Sandra Ponzanesi's chapter establishes a connection between the Italian colonial visual archive and its postcolonial rendition through the analysis of visual art work (Morgan Knibbe's 2013 *Shipwreck*, Dagmawi Yimer's 2014 *Asmat/Nomi*, and Stefano Liberti and Andrea Segre's 2012 *Mare Chiuso*), re-linking Italy's colonial deportation policies in Libya (via the analysis of Augusto Genina's 1942 imperial film *Bengasi*) to the country's violent anti-immigration policies. A comparative analysis of visual sources about the production of migratory geographies by both migrants and activists provides Gabriele Proglgio with «a sentimental view» (p. 149) of Lampedusa. Based on ethnographic field work, film analysis, and information retrieved on the open data media platform of the activist collective LiveUAmmap, Proglgio's chapter illustrates how memories, affect, and collective mapping, all concur to the production of Lampedusa as a social borderscape. Moving from space to objects, Federica Mazzara's chapter focuses on the artactivist museum Porto M., based in Lampedusa and founded by the local collective Askavusa, where the «debris» left behind on board after the shipwrecks are collected and displayed to the public. This open archival space for the commemoration of migrant lives, where «migrants and refugees gain the possibility to come out of the invisible mass to which they are commonly relegated» (p. 159), offers an example of non-institutional memorialization in a complex process of creating a heritage space in Lampedusa.

In considering the second topical area of migrant bodies and the affective dimension, Simona Wright's chapter explores the cinematic «translations» of suffering and the possibility of renegotiating the polity in the 2014 short *Asmat/Nomi* by Dagmawi Yimer, a work that names, mourns, and celebrates the victims of the October 3, 2013 shipwreck off Lampedusa, one of the deadliest sea tragedies of our time. Engaging with Agamben's distinction between *zoē* and *bios*, Wright argues that the corporeal, material physicality of the migrant bodies in *Asmat* «invites reflections on the necessity to produce a «form of life» that is not mere survival, but the affirmation of a principle of community» (p. 97). Katy Budge's «O Hear Us When We Cry To Thee» reverses Wright's perspective by focusing on the experiences of the people (seafarers, fishermen, and rescue operators) who are involved in search and rescue operations off the coasts of Lampedusa. These stories of shipwrecks from the point of view of the rescuers reinstate, according to Budge, humanitarian values such as compassion and humility. Based on the author's fieldwork conducted in Lampedusa in 2005,

Gianluca Gatta's chapter also deals with the management of migrant bodies, focusing on official statements and pictures delivered during the landing stage by patrolling guards and humanitarian workers. Contrary to Budge's optimistic conclusions, Gatta argues that the careful orchestration of visibility and text in term of «treatment» functions to assuage public anxieties about the migration crisis by producing foreign bodies at risk in need of protection. The production and management of regimes of visibility and their link to affect are the focus of Chiara Giubilaro's chapter, taking as its starting point Butler's notion of 'frames' as a conceptual tool that may help unsettle the dominant racialized and gendered aesthetics of Mediterranean migrations. Giubilaro's analysis of the «visual topography» of the October 3, 2013 shipwreck urges us to move beyond the framing process by including the affective and ethical involvement of the viewer in their relationship with the migrant bodies on display in the dominant media spectacle. In closing, Fabrice Olivier Dubosc's chapter traces the visual sources of contemporary shipwrecks back to iconic texts and paintings such as Turner's «The Slave Ship,» and the story of the cult of Our Lady of Lampedusa in its creolized Southern American version in the seventeenth and eighteenth century. Adopting a psychoanalytic and human psychology perspective, Dubosc argues that this syncretic network of social representations of the killing, burial, and mourning of slaves in conjunction with the Lampedusa shipwrecks demonstrates the active working of «involuntary memory» in the collective consciousness of Europeans, past and present.

«Multiple» and «variable» (p. 2) are the two words that best describe both the value and the limit of the volume's interdisciplinary effort, combining fieldwork case studies, eyewitness accounts, ethnographic testimonies, cinematic, visual, and textual representations, media discourse analysis, and historical surveys. Taken in its totality, the book effects a critical shift from empirical data to critical analysis, turning Lampedusa from a geo-political configuration to a pre(text) for probing analytical categories relevant to the contemporary Mediterranean order, such as border production (Proglione and Odasso, Proglione), biopolitical management (Gatta), abjection (Giuliani), regime of visibility (Giubilaro), and postcolonial consciousness (Ponzanesi).

One of the merits of the book consists precisely in its reformulation of the Lampedusa frontier as relevant not only to the Italian (and European) context, but as paradigmatic of the many borders proliferating along crucial migratory routes globally. In doing so, *Border Lampedusa* offers an important critical tool to scholars who may be experts of other geo-political contexts where such critical categories are also germane. *Border Lampedusa* in fact combines empirical analysis at localized level with larger meta-critical frameworks relevant to border studies, citizenship studies, migration studies, media studies, and postcolonial studies. The volume adopts such a multiplicity of disciplinary

methods, reflecting the complexity of its object of study, yet at times the lack of methodological consistency within the same chapter subtracts from the rigor of the overall analysis. Moreover, while a number of chapters addresses the racist underpinning of new techniques of violent border governance, the mass death of Black bodies in the Mediterranean is hardly addressed directly in its trans-historical reality as a form of genocidal anti-blackness. Taking into account that the majority of the people to whose memory the volume is dedicated are indeed Black people, would have instead contributed to bringing to light the systemic anti-black subjection perpetrated in Lampedusa and at the southern borders of Europe.

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Katiuscia Carnà e Sara Rossetti

Kotha. Donne bangladesi nella Roma che cambia

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Uscito nella collana «Sessimo e razzismo» e arricchito dal reportage fotografico di Alice Valente Visco, *Kotha* (da una parola bengali che fonde il concetto di storia con l'idea di racconto) s'inserisce nell'attuale dibattito sull'immigrazione italiana e internazionale. Più nello specifico, contribuisce agli studi sulla diaspora bangladesi, regalando una prospettiva di genere di cui si sentiva la mancanza, in quanto le ricerche precedenti si sono orientate prevalentemente sui *probashi* («migrante» in bengali) maschi, più numerosi e radicati da un tempo maggiore (si veda ad esempio, *Pigneto-Banglatown*, a cura di Francesco Pompeo, Roma, Meti, 2011; Andrea Priori, *Romer probashira*, ivi, 2012). Ciò nonostante, il numero delle donne è in continuo aumento, a testimonianza della stabilizzazione della comunità migrante in Italia, uno sviluppo che rende il testo attuale e necessario.

Roma, nello specifico Tor Pignattara (ribattezzata *Banglatown* anche dagli stessi bangladesi), è una delle comunità più grandi e longeve nel territorio italiano. Formatasi a partire dai primi anni novanta del Novecento, conta gran parte dei 35.000 membri residenti nel Lazio (sui circa 122.000 in tutta Italia, in base ai dati IDOS del 2017). La ricerca di Katiuscia Carnà e Sara Rossetti si svolge prevalentemente nel cuore del quartiere, ma spazia ove necessario nei luoghi significativi per le intervistate come, più in generale, per la comunità, quali Piazza Vittorio e Centocelle.

Le autrici hanno costruito attorno ai loro principali interessi scientifici – lingua e religione – lo sfondo per interviste in profondità, etnografie e osservazione