



DIRECTIONALITY/FLOW

Volumes of text have been written on Italian presence in America. Even a quick Google search will demonstrate that, after the culture wars of the 1980s, the interest of Americanists worldwide has shifted to ethnic and diasporic studies within the Americas, which, slowly, begin to recognize the consequences of white ethnocentrism, whether Anglo, Franco or Hispano. Such studies, beyond doubt, are as important as they are valuable: rediscovering or uncovering essential moments in the histories of the Americas, they have provided voice to those long lost in the space of ineffability. And yet, studies of this nature follow the “standard” directionality of the value transfer tied to each wave of migration: from Europe to the Americas. Thus conceived “translation” is, of course, essential in the study of the American cultures. Still, bearing in mind the cultural productivity of the Americas and the demonstrable bidirectionality of the value transfer, it is just as important to dedicate some academic attention to phenomena oriented along the opposite vector: Italy, beyond doubt, has in/formed American cultures for centuries, but since the outbreak of World War II the influx of values (both intellectual and material) generated in the Americas has been responsible for the co-shaping of the Italy of today. The present volume, generously guest-edited by Claudio Salmeri of the University of Silesia in Katowice, Poland, offers a multifaceted insight into how American values have been “translated into Italian” and accommodated within the cultural space of twenty-first century Italy. The volume’s title, *Trans/Lazio*, is thus both a gesture in recognition of the complexity of the Italian cultural space and an attempt to accommodate theoretical premises of polysystem theory in a study of the mutual relations between

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RIAS VOL. 10, FALL-WINTER N° 2/2017

Italy and America as simultaneously donor and acceptor cultures, simultaneously distinctive and accommodating. Emphasizing these values, the present, aptly titled, issue ushers in the second decade of *RIAS*, a journal univocally dedicated to the hemispheric and transoceanic study of the Americas.

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