

GIULIA PEPE, *New migrations, New multilingual practices, new identities: The case of post-2008 Italian migrants in London*. Cham: Springer, 2022. Pp. 219. Hb. £89.99.

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This book explores the construction of identity through translanguaging among post-2008 Italian migrants to London, while addressing a gap in knowledge about their linguistic repertoires. Pepe, herself a member of this ‘wave’, challenges the conception among the general public and academic observers that post-2008 migration is best understood as a ‘brain drain’ (52). Situating her research in socio-cultural linguistics in its intersection with contemporary migration literature, she insists on the heterogeneity and ‘superdiversity’ of this group, whose members have distinct language repertoires, levels of education, and socio-economic backgrounds. Pepe stresses the economic context, arguing that ‘the 2008 crisis was definitely *the* factor leading towards ... the mass migratory phenomenon’ (47-48). The data was gathered through participant observations, followed by interviews with selected participants, who were friends and acquaintances in the London Italian community. Pepe discusses how she navigated her participant-researcher role, and self-reflection forms part of her analysis.

In Part 1, Pepe outlines the history of Italian migration to London, with attention to linguistic and socio-cultural features. She then introduces the post-2008 generation of migrants, their continuities and discontinuities with earlier generations. While highlighting differences in settlement patterns, means of community formation, and gendered migratory trajectories, Pepe argues that new migrants forge their identity in dialogue with earlier ideas of the Italian diaspora. Pepe notes the shift from the largely ‘dialect’-speaking post-war community, to post-2008 migrants who typically consider Italian their first language. Pepe considers how ideologies relating to dialect influence young migrants’ strategic deployment of language varieties, pointing out that ‘dialects did not disappear from the linguistic repertoires of Italian migrants’ (62), but their use has shifted and taken on new indexical meanings.

Part 2 draws on Pepe’s data to explore the linguistic negotiation of national, professional and migrant identity by the post-2008 ‘wave’. She argues for a re-conceptualisation of the migrant community, reflecting the changes this social form has undergone through the processes of globalisation and transnationalism. She introduces the concept of ‘non-community’ (24), which is disavowed and whose existence is sometimes denied by its members, while also positing the existence of grassroots ‘sub-communities’, reflecting the fragmented nature of the post-2008 migrant population. Pepe explores linguistic practices, particularly the use of dialect and translanguaging, which speakers use to align with and challenge communal identities. Through ambivalent engagements with such practices, participants may deploy translanguaging to integrate aspects of their new environments and ironically signal group membership, while simultaneously labelling such practices as incorrect or stereotypical of earlier migrants.

Pepe guides us through ‘the unresolvable puzzle regarding ... *us* and *them*’ (191, emphasis original) as these migrants grapple with their multiple (non-)belongings, forging distinct identities through linguistic practices which separate them from past migrants, relatives, and non-migrant peers. Pepe suggests that through their deployment of translanguaging, emerging in a form unique to this ‘wave’ of migrants, the most important source of a ‘group social identity’ among her diverse participants may be their ‘openness to a style that is an index of the group’s transnational nature’ (204).