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Rethinking Italy's Margins Through Walking: Mobility, Activism and Positionality in Wu Ming 2's *Il sentiero luminoso* (2016) and Giuliano Santoro's *Su due piedi* (2012)

Simone Brioni Dr.
simone.brioni@stonybrook.edu

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Brioni, Simone

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Rethinking Italy's Margins Through Walking: Environmental Activism in Wu Ming 2's *Il sentiero luminoso* (2016) and Giuliano Santoro's *Su due piedi* (2012)

Simone Brioni

This article examines how Wu Ming 2 (Giovanni Cattabriga) and Giuliano Santoro have represented walking as an ethical and political endeavor which involves rethinking the relationship between individuals, communities, and territories in their literary works. The article focuses in particular on Wu Ming 2's *Il sentiero luminoso* (The Bright Path, 2016) and Santoro's *Su due piedi: Camminando per un mese attraverso la Calabria* (On My Two Feet: Walking for a Month in Calabria, 2012). Walking allows both authors to witness the results of exploitation and subtraction of the land, and to underline the strong links of environmental activism to social activism and justice.

I argue that these texts propose a “postcolonial” revisitation of the human-land relationship by referring to Robert P. Marzec's reflections on how colonization is related to the capitalist and neoliberal privatization and exploitation of the land. His book, *An Ecological and Postcolonial Study of Literature: From Daniel Defoe to Salman Rushdie*, argues that “the massive [...] worldwide restructuring of humanity's relation to the land—a restructuring that now gravely impacts the earth's ecosystems—has oddly been passed over by contemporary literary and cultural theorists” (2007, 1–2). Marzec further develops his reflections about ecology and colonization arguing that “this process of subtraction [of the land] occurred first ‘at home,’ [...] then continued abroad with the subtraction of ‘exotic land’” (ibid., 42). The capitalist organization of the social space in Europe played a key role in the development of colonial ideology, which governed actions within Europe and abroad. Edward Said's work on this topic is often quoted in *An Ecological and Postcolonial Study of Literature*, since he examined “the integral relation between the enclosing of the land of the colonizer and the cultivation of the land of the colonized” (ibid., 11). Nonetheless, “the disciplines of postcolonial and ecological studies register only a glimmering of an ontological engagement with the land—with, in a phrase, the *essential nexus* of identity formation, culture, and colonization” (ibid., 25). Looking at British literature from the late seventeenth century to the present, Marzec urges postcolonial studies scholars to investigate how the creation of enclosures “is a structure that stands as a formal diagram for future colonial developments: before England began to colonize ‘open,’ ‘wild,’ and ‘uncultivated’ land and subjects abroad, it created an apparatus for colonizing its open land and subjects at home—an apparatus that could be transplanted to distant territories” (ibid., 3). Marzec argues that a postcolonial approach to the depiction of land in literature can be useful to explore how a colonial cultural order and ideology became a material reality first in Europe and then in the colonies:

Without an extended and transdisciplinary discourse of critique of the land—its colonial and neocolonial history and ontology— we run the risk of reifying even further the imperial enclosures of individual, ethnic, national, religious, and global essentialism. Only through such a critique may we open a more

originary and nonfoundational approach to the possible ways a heterogeneous citizenry can inhabit the earth. (ibid., 26)

Investigating the connection between colonial identity formation, the land, and capitalism/neoliberalism can help to understand the apparatus that has turned the land into a useful and organized space for the existing economic order.

Drawing on Marzec's reflections on colonial ideology and ecology, I argue that *Il sentiero luminoso* and *Su due piedi* do not "come to accept the essence of 'land,' and its various formations, as self-evident," and that they invite questions about the commodification of land through walking (ibid., 2). Although both *Il sentiero luminoso* and *Su due piedi* refer to Italian colonialism, I am interested in how they describe the exploitation of the land as a form of internal colonialism, which modifies how people live together and their relationship to space. By detaching the term "postcolonialism" from Italian colonialism itself, by no means am I equating the historical exploitation of the land that took place in the colonies with Italy's progressive industrialization and urbanization. I am suggesting instead that reflections about the capitalist and neoliberal organization of space can be useful to understand "the textual, administrative, economic, and political apparatus of imperialism: a totalizing change in spatial awareness and human relations" in the colonial metropole (ibid., 26). If David Forgacs is right to argue that "margins are produced by particular ways of seeing and organizing social space" (2014, 1)—and I believe he is—literature about walking that takes an activist approach invites us to uncover how marginality is spatially and socially constructed.

Il sentiero luminoso and *Su due piedi* share many themes, and are both products of the Wu Ming Foundation, "a grassroots federation of collectives, inquiry groups and laboratories, as well as artistic, cultural and political projects which were all born on or around [the] blog," *Giap* (Wu Ming 2017). This blog was founded in 2000 by a collective of writers based in Bologna, Italy. Along with Wu Ming 2, it currently includes two more members: Wu Ming 1 (Roberto Bui) and Wu Ming 4 (Federico Guglielmi). Wu Ming authored the bestselling novel *Q* (1999) under the name Luther Blissett and several historical novels.

Wu Ming 2 wrote *Il sentiero degli dei* (The Path of Gods, 2010) and *Il sentiero luminoso* about his walks from Bologna to Florence and Bologna to Milan, respectively. These texts openly contest the high-speed train lines that have been built between these cities, and show the impact of this and other large-scale infrastructures on the territory. *Il sentiero degli dei* and *Il sentiero luminoso* are parts of a quadrilogy, which Wu Ming 2 aims at completing in the future by writing of his walks from Milan to Turin, and from Turin to the Italian border with France, following the entire path of the high-speed train or TAV—an acronym for "treno ad alta velocità"—an infrastructural project that started in the mid-1990s among protests and has not yet been completed (Wu Ming 2016).

A quick search of Giuliano Santoro's name in *Giap* shows his extensive collaboration with Wu Ming. As Santoro noted during a presentation of his book in Rome on July 9, 2012, *Su due piedi* was inspired by Wu Ming 2's *Il sentiero degli dei*. Moreover, Wu Ming 2 wrote the preface of *Su due piedi*. Like Wu Ming 2, Santoro has discussed a walking experience from Cavallerizzo to Montalto d'Aspromonte in Calabria. In other words, this article considers the works by two authors who engage in an ongoing dialogue and share a common interest in walking as an epistemological, political, and aesthetic practice.

Between Art and Activism: *Stalker. Osservatorio nomade*

Modern and contemporary European literature has often described errancy as an epistemic activity that allows the walker to understand modernity and to re-appropriate the spaces of exclusion that modernity creates. According to Donna Landry's analysis of walking in late eighteenth-century British literature, "walking ceased to be merely walking and became self-conscious pedestrianism," or, in other words, a way of reflecting about modernity (2001, 205). For instance, William Wordsworth was committed to the right to roam, and writing about walking went alongside his championing of public footpaths (Landry 2001, 213). Analyzing the representation of *flâneurs* at the beginning of the twentieth century in the German context, Anke Gleber defines *flânerie* as a product of

the most accelerated capitalist development in modern history, one that resulted in the emergence of various new dispositions, rapid urbanization and industrialization, and an increased influence of the visual upon our experience of reality. It is connected to such contemporary issues as the interpretation of images, visual literacy, power and public space [...] and the cultural definition of identity. (1998, 8)

Walking has been frequently reconfigured in literature as a practice that is related to important themes in geography and cultural studies, including embodiment, landscape, place, experience, mobility, materiality, subjectivity, and objectivity.

While the experiences described by Landy and Gleber are found respectively in a rural environment and in the city center, contemporary experiences of walking as an epistemic practice frequently take place in liminal spaces that are geographically peripheral to urban centers. Moreover, while *flânerie* indicated the ability of a privileged individual to wander as a way to detach themselves from the crowds, the contemporary experiences are often collective endeavors. For instance, a group of architects created an urban art laboratory in Rome in 1995 named *Stalker/Osservatorio Nomade*, which "engage[d] research and actions within the landscape with particular attention to the areas around the city's margins and forgotten urban space" (*Stalker*).¹ One of the most celebrated activities of this group was a seventy-kilometer walk that was completed in five days and four nights on and around Rome's main ring road, crossing through the "invisible City," that is, the "unused areas that make up over 50% of [Italy's] capital city." *Stalker/Osservatorio Nomade*'s goal of exploring Rome's abandoned spaces also led to the project "Campo Boario," an occupation of the former slaughterhouse in Testaccio—a place that ceased its commercial activity in 1975—to create a cultural center called "Ararat." The occupation of Ararat lasted from 1999 to 2004, and it offered a reference point in Italy for NGOs that specialized in welcoming immigrants, refugees (in particular the Kurdish communities of Rome), and the Rom Kalderasha.

In a conversation between Wu Ming 2 and Santoro (Santoro 2016), the *Stalker/Osservatorio Nomade* initiative is defined as inspirational in using walking as a practice to rethink suburban territories and spaces of marginalization and exclusion. In general, the novels analyzed in this article can be seen as part of a larger trend in contemporary Italian literature that focuses on

¹ The quotation comes from an unpublished book in English written by members of the collective, which has collected all of the activity of *Stalker/Osservatorio Nomade* since its beginnings. I would like to thank Lorenzo Romito for insightful information about the group and for allowing me to read and quote from this unpublished text.

environmental issues (Wu Ming 2 and Cecchini 2019). The proliferation of these texts testifies to humans' profound impact on Earth, which has caused a significant change in its ecosystems.

Following Walden's Path: Wu Ming 2's *Il sentiero luminoso*

Il sentiero luminoso can be seen as part of an ongoing dialogue between Wu Ming 2 and the different artists and activists within the Wu Ming Foundation who have attempted to theorize, represent, and modify the relationship between space and the practice of space, or the ways in which people operate or do things within a space.² For instance, Wu Ming 1 wrote *Un viaggio che non promettiamo breve* (We Don't Promise the Journey Will Be Short, 2016), an account of the No-TAV movement which is protesting the construction of a high-speed rail line in Val di Susa. Wu Ming also collaborates with a collective named Alpinismo Molotov, a group whose activity focuses on trekking and analyzing the social, cultural, and environmental transformations in the mountains.

Il sentiero degli dei and *Il sentiero luminoso* are not Wu Ming 2's only artistic contributions on the practice of walking and the transformation of the landscape. Wu Ming 2's work on the fictional construction of space includes edited volumes,³ performances,⁴ itinerant workshops,⁵ and a photography exhibition and book made in collaboration with a photography collective called Terraproject.⁶ Wu Ming 2's different narrative experiences might explain the hybrid nature of *Il sentiero luminoso*, which—like *Il sentiero degli dei*—can be defined as “una guida per escursionisti, una raccolta di novelle, un diario di bordo, un saggio, un reportage, un'inchiesta e chissà cos'altro” (2016, 4; “a guide for hikers, a collection of novels, a logbook, an essay, reportage, an investigation, and who knows what else”).⁷ The thematic and stylistic heterogeneity of the two texts is reflected in their structure. *Il sentiero degli dei* follows Wu Ming 2's progress on the path chronologically, and it is divided into five “tappe” (“stages”) between Bologna and Firenze and five “notturmi” (“nocturnes”), “racconti brevi [...] che si possono leggere anche in maniera autonoma” (2010, 7; “short stories [...] which can also be read separately”). The last part of the book is a “guida pratica” (“practical guide”) for those who would like to follow Wu Ming 2's itinerary through the Apennines (2010, 161–170). *Il sentiero luminoso* also contains a “guida pratica” (2016, 275–285), but the narrative structure is much more complicated, as the core of the volume includes eight chapters on the first stage of the tour, which are interspersed with four chapters about the preparation, and six chapters entitled “Flash forward” about the last part of the journey. Both novels present a fictional narrator—Gerolamo

² The definition of “practice” throughout this essay draws on Michel de Certeau's use of this term to indicate everyday “ways of operating’ or doing things” (de Certeau 2002, xiv). It is thanks to “practice” if “it [is] possible to articulate [...] a body of theoretical questions, methods, categories, and perspectives” (ibid., xiv).

³ See *La via dei viaggiatori, Un'antologia per camminatori* (2015), the translation of *The Footpath Way: An Anthology for Walkers* (1911, originally edited by Hilaire Belloc), an anthology of texts about walking edited by Wu Ming 2.

⁴ See *GODImenti: come inceppare la Grande Opera e vivere felici* (Enjoyments: How to Stop Big Construction and Live Happily [Wu Ming 2 2014a]), a reading-performance with guitarist Egle Sommacal and a writing laboratory, which produced an anthology of texts against the G.O.D.I.I., “Grandi Opere Dannose Inutili e Imposte” (Big, Damaging, Useless, and Imposed Infrastructures).

⁵ See the volume *Storie, paesaggi, attraversamenti. Lungo la via Francigena con Wu Ming 2* (Stories, Landscapes, Crossings. On the Via Francigena with Wu Ming 2 [2014b]), the result of an itinerant site-specific workshop.

⁶ See *4* (Wu Ming 2 and Terraproject 2013), a book and a photography exhibition based on the four natural elements.

⁷ Unless otherwise indicated, all translations in this article are mine.

in *Il sentiero luminoso*, and a friend of Gerolamo, who is a writer, in *Il sentiero degli dei*—in order to place distance between Wu Ming 2’s walking experience and his narration of it.

Wu Ming 2’s reflections about walking and space are also fictionalized in his first solo novel, *Guerra agli umani* (War on Humans). A character named Marco Walden decides to walk away from civilization and live in the woods, just like Henry David Thoreau. It is therefore no surprise that Wu Ming 2 wrote the introduction to the Italian edition of *Walden; or, Life in the Woods* (1854), in which he describes Thoreau as the creator of a “method,” which involves “essenzialità, humor and selvatico [sic]” (Wu Ming 2 2005, vii–xii; “minimalism, humor, and the wilderness”), three elements that might be interesting to analyze in relation to *Il sentiero luminoso*. “Humor” is definitely present in *Il sentiero luminoso*, and walking is presented as an activity in a “minor” key that mocks and potentially subverts the enthusiastic narratives of those who promote “major” infrastructural interventions. For instance, at the end of his walk, Gerolamo breaks a brick by the entrance to the Expo 2015 site in a ceremonial gesture, with the explicit wish that any large and environmentally harmful events will never again take place (Wu Ming 2 2016, 275). Wu Ming 2 presents landscape—to use Michel de Certeau’s words—as “the stage for a war of narratives,” those narratives produced by political powers, the media, urban planners, and developers versus “small” or grassroots narratives produced through the practice of space (1998, 143).

The experiential relationship between human beings and “il selvatico” (“the wilderness”) is less evident in *Il sentiero luminoso*. Gerolamo, in walking, does not enjoy a sense of solitude nor does he awaken his senses. He experiences, instead, sensory deprivation. Through Wu Ming 2 we see how the natural world is disappearing in Italy; he describes a landscape that has been anthropomorphized. While Romantic literature saw walking as a way to experience a palimpsest of sights, sounds, and smells, Wu Ming 2 sees it as a means of recovering a narrative that can only be reconstructed through examining the traces that remain, a landscape and way of life that has been effaced by shopping centers (2016, 139) and now-abandoned nuclear power plants, which are seen to embody the megalomania of the dominant neoliberal ideology (ibid., 192–93).

According to Wu Ming 2, another key aspect of *Walden* is the invitation to find what is essential in life, which includes a focus on individualism as a pathway to discovery: “Thoreau canta l’individuo, esalta l’autonomia e non potrebbe essere altrimenti: ciascuno deve fare il proprio cammino” (2005, ix; “Thoreau praises the individual, celebrates autonomy, and it could not be otherwise: everyone has to pursue his or her own path”). Wu Ming 2 seems to be referring to a passage in *Walden*, in which Thoreau invited his readers to find their own “mode of living” rather than adopting his own or anybody else’s (Thoreau 2004, 71). This passage also reminds us of Wu Ming 2’s invitation to readers to forge their own path at the beginning of *Il sentiero luminoso*:

Terminata la lettura, non sarete in grado di riprodurre sulla mappa il *mio* sentiero da Bologna a Milano, ma forse vi prenderà la voglia di tracciarne uno *vostro*, tra due città di vostra scelta. Se questo accadrà, invece di mille viandanti che percorrono lo stesso sentiero –protetto, delimitato e curato– ne avremo forse cento che camminano cento tracce diverse, si intrufolano in cento diversi terreni, [...] discutono con cento diversi proprietari e pongono, con i passi e le parole, cento domande di diritto al paesaggio. (2016, 12)

(After reading this book you will not be able to chart *my* itinerary from Bologna to Milan on a map, but perhaps you would like to chart *your* own, between two cities of your choice. If this were to happen, instead of a hundred wanderers who walk the same path—shielded, circumscribed and well-maintained—we would have perhaps a hundred people walking a hundred different paths, entering into a hundred different fields, [...] talking to a hundred different landowners and asking, through their routes and words, a hundred questions about the right to landscape.)

This excerpt imagines the creation of an activist community through walking and envisions the individual and collective political practices as being closely connected.

Spaces of Marginalization, Spaces of Belonging: Counter-Mapping Italy's Contemporaneity

Il sentiero luminoso presents cartography, to quote David Pinder, as a “*contested* practice, embedded within particular sets of power relations [since] maps are bound up with the production and reproduction of social life” (2005, 405). For instance, maps and direct experience are contrasted in the following passage by Wu Ming 2: “Alla scala uno a uno, centrimetro dopo centimetro, prenderanno fuoco tutte le vostre mappe” (2016, 150; “At a 1:1 map scale, centimeter after centimeter, all of your maps will burn”). In this quote, Wu Ming 2 uses a hyperbole to emphasize that when space is experienced on-the-ground, through walking, it obliterates the need for maps, which offer a symbolic depiction of space, and a false sense of familiarity with a terrain never experienced. This passage seems to describe the irreconcilable difference, as de Certeau has it, between what walkers experience and what geographers and urban planners see:

The long poem of walking manipulates spatial organizations, no matter how panoptic they may be: it is neither foreign to them (it can take place only within them) nor in conformity with them (it does not receive its identity from them). It creates shadows and ambiguities within them [...] it is like a peddler, carrying something surprising, transverse or attractive. (de Certeau 2002, 101)

This passage compares and contrasts the realm of lived experience with the feeling of spatial ubiquity experienced by those who look at the city on a map, the city as viewed from above. Likewise, *Il sentiero luminoso* invites readers to discard these fixed or elevated vantage points in favor of mobile, on-the-ground, partial perspectives.

Indeed, Wu Ming 2's call to boycott Google Maps (2016, 150) suggests that this tool is a “technology of power”—to use an expression first introduced by John Brian Harley in 1992 (1992, 243). Instead of offering an objective representation of reality, Google Maps shapes our knowledge about places, engendering political, social, and economic fantasies about them. As John Pickles argues, maps “precede the territories they ‘represent’” as they inscribe boundaries, define spatial categories and construct forms that have material effects (2004, 5). As mapping the territory is part of the colonial legacy and has been used to create hierarchies of power, this passage in *Il sentiero luminoso* is aimed at highlighting—as Serenella Iovino argues—that “maps themselves are never neutral or innocent” (2016, 2). Google Maps and mapmaking technology

commodify space, assigning it value and meaning based upon human use, and replicate the colonial ideology that is constitutive of geography as a modern discipline.

An important artistic precursor to *Il sentiero luminoso* is the Situationist movement and Guy Debord's psychogeography, "a new form of geographical investigation that can enable the revolutionary reappropriation of the landscape" (Bonnett 1989, 136).⁸ According to Debord, psychogeography is a playful investigation of urban environments or "the study of the precise laws and specific effects of the geographical environment, consciously organized or not, on the emotions and behavior of individuals" (2006, 24). Unlike psychogeography, whose explorations remained "in need of further address" and did not produce an "appropriate space" to put forward "demands for rights to the city" (Pinder 2005, 400), Wu Ming 2's walks are connected with social activism (Wu Ming 2 and Cecchini 2019).

Through walking, Wu Ming 2 creates new routes through the landscape reminiscent of Thoreau's in *Civil Disobedience* (1849), given that forging new paths also means walking across private property. In fact, one of the main reasons Wu Ming 2 created a fictional narrator for *Il sentiero luminoso* was in order to avoid potential prosecution.⁹ Both Thoreau and Wu Ming 2 are solitary walkers, but this does not mean that their reflections are exclusively introspective. Thoreau presents walking as a relational activity, which allows him to come in contact with other people outside their domestic environments. For instance, in a significant passage in "Walking," Thoreau describes his chance meeting with a Black individual and critically reflects on racism:

A tanned skin is something more than respectable, and perhaps olive is a fitter color than white for a man—a denizen of the woods. "The pale white man!" I do not wonder that the African pitied him. Darwin the naturalist says, "A white man bathing by the side of a Tahitian was like a plant bleached by the gardener's art, compared with a fine, dark green one, growing vigorously in the open fields. (1980, 673)

Similarly, walking in *Il sentiero luminoso* allows Wu Ming 2 to think about space and discrimination for asylum seekers, refugees, and immigrants. Some sections of the book compare the *ius excludendi* in Italian law—the right to keep people off private property—to the *Allemansrätt*, the freedom to roam in many Northern European countries, which allows the general public's right to access privately owned land if they do not damage the property and do not infringe on the right of the owner to his or her privacy (Wu Ming 2 2016, 147). Wu Ming 2 argues that the *ius excludendi* turns "l'accoglienza" ("hospitality") into "un'eccezione alla regola" (ibid; "an exception to the rule.") This thought leads him to reflect upon the condition of migrants:

Fuggo dall'ennesima proprietà privata, infastidito dall'ingiustizia [...] quando vorrei soltanto attraversare una terra, senza commettere nulla di male. [...] Penso al malessere che deve sentirsi addosso chi si trova ogni giorno in questa

⁸The Luther Blisset project referred to Debord's work in different articles such as *Della guerra psichica nella metropoli traiettoriale* (From the Psychic War to the Trajectorial Metropolis) and *Nomadismi superficiali alla conquista della Terra* (Superficial Nomadisms to the Conquest of the Earth).

⁹A sociology MA student, Roberta Chiroli, was condemned to 9 months in prison as she used the first person plural to narrate the struggles of the No-TAV movement in Val di Susa. As Christian Raimo and Francesca Coin argue, this highly controversial court decision undermined academic freedom (2016).

condizione, perché vive e lavora nel posto sbagliato, senza le carte in regola per rimanerci. Oppure chi viaggia per mesi, frustrato da leggi ancor più violente, [...] clandestino ventiquattr'ore al giorno, delinquente anche senza delinquere, perseguitato perché fuori posto, sottomesso all'arbitrio del primo che passa. Non voglio nemmeno paragonare un viaggio di piacere come il mio con quello di chi si sposta per necessità eppure sono convinto che la libertà di movimento non sia un cruccio per turisti annoiati, ma una questione che riguarda, con intensità diverse, tutti gli uomini e le donne del pianeta. (ibid., 146)

(I flee from another private property, annoyed by the injustice [...] while I just would like to cross the land, without doing any harm. [...] I think of the uneasiness of those that have to feel this way, finding themselves in this condition daily because they live and work in the wrong place, without the right papers to stay there. Or those who travel for months, being subjected to even more violent laws [...] people who need to hide twenty-four hours a day, criminals without committing a crime, victims of persecution because they are displaced, vulnerable to the unlawful acts of the first person who passes by. I don't even want to compare my trip for pleasure to that of those who move out of necessity, but I am convinced that freedom of movement is not just an issue for bored tourists, but for all men and women on this planet, to differing degrees.)

Although Wu Ming 2 makes a clear distinction between types of walkers (those who travel for pleasure and those who travel out of need), here the act of walking is one that connotes hybridism, translation, and mobility. Walking—whether crossing the land from necessity, as migrants must, or crossing it recreationally, to explore and discover, like Wu Ming 2—seems oppositional to concepts such as identity, centrality, homogeneity, stability, and territory.

According to Wu Ming 2, walking allows us to rethink urban elements and to see how infrastructure marginalizes people, but it also invites us to imagine the city as a historical palimpsest, a layering of multiple, coexisting temporalities. For instance, a passage of *Il sentiero luminoso* compares the ancient walls of Bologna to the beltway constructed around the city, as they were both built for a security purposes, to keep out undesirable subjects in different historical periods. Beyond the bypass that surrounds Bologna, an incinerator, a prison, a center for refugees are located (ibid., 48).

Walking allows Gerolamo to recognize how land administration has led to the need for surveillance technologies and to marginalization. Among the several references to different historic events that are mentioned in *Il sentiero luminoso*, Gerolamo discovers a street called Strada Regina (Queen Street). This street was built during the late period of the Roman Empire to connect Cremona and Milan, but it fell into disuse when people started to use cars as their main means of transportation (Wu Ming 2 2016, 219). This discovery also reconfigures walking as a kind of archaeological activity.

The historical event that perhaps inspires Gerolamo the most is the Italian resistance to Fascism, which is defined as “guerra patriottica” (“patriotic war”), “guerra di classe” (“class war”), and “guerra civile” (ibid., 163; “civil war”). The centrality of the Italian resistance to Fascism in *Il sentiero luminoso* is signaled not only by the presence of many stories about this

movement, but also in the cartoon map that precedes and introduces the text. In this map “Casa Cervi”—the house and museum of the seven anti-Fascist brothers who were killed by Fascists in 1943—is labeled with the same font size used to indicate villages like “Pizzighettone” and “Fontanellato” (ibid., 4–5). The affective geography that is represented in the map is set in contrast to the “useful” representation of space that is provided by Google Maps.

Drawing on Anne Whiston Spirn’s reflections about walking and storytelling, Wu Ming 2 “navigates the landscape using stories as a guide, and landscape helps [him] to remember stories [... Landscape] and narrative are inextricably linked in reading through imagination and are most accessible through the act of walking” (2000, 22). This close link between storytelling and walking is expressed in the final lines of *Il sentiero luminoso*, where Gerolamo argues that “diritto al paesaggio significa riappropriarsi di un alfabeto complesso, senza il quale non sappiamo leggere e scrivere, e quindi ci facciamo fregare, come accade agli illetterati” (Wu Ming 2 2016, 274; “the right to traverse the landscape means reappropriating a complex alphabet, without which we are unable to read and write and are liable to be swindled, like the illiterate”). By presenting the landscape as an alphabet that needs to be deciphered, Wu Ming 2 is implicitly referring to de Certeau’s definition of walking as a “pedestrian speech act” or a “space of enunciation” that could “elude urbanistic systematicity” (2002, 98). It is also a process: “To walk is to lack a site. It is the indeterminate process of being both absent and in search of the proper, of one’s own,” an idea which is echoed in *Il sentiero luminoso* (de Certeau 1985, 139). Gerolamo’s itinerary starts from Bologna, but he describes the city where he lives as a place that he rediscovers through walking, since its urban landscape is constantly under threat of those who want to privatize its spaces. For instance, Wu Ming 2 mentions the FICO Eataly World, Fabbrica Italiana Contadina (2016, 22; Peasant Italian Factory), a store devoted to organic Italian food, whose business model is at odds with community-supported agriculture (ibid., 55–57). Walking is an ecocritical activity that separates Gerolamo from the mundane, and allows him to experience a sense of dislocation in his hometown, Bologna.¹⁰

A second key idea of de Certeau’s that permeates *Il sentiero luminoso* is that “space is a practiced place” (2002, 117); Wu Ming 2 shows how walking gives new meaning to space, allowing for its collective reappropriation. Significantly the book opens with a quote by Eugenio Turri—“Ogni atto sul territorio è un atto politico” (ibid., 33; “Every act on a land is a political act”)—who denounced the destruction of the Italian landscape in his landmark *La conoscenza del territorio: metodologia per un’analisi storico-geografica* (Knowledge of the Territory: Methodology for a Historical and Geographical Analysis). The activity of walking is described in *Il sentiero luminoso* as based on a paradox: by crossing private properties, Gerolamo is breaking the law, but his infraction is aimed at raising consciousness that “the landscape is a key element of individual and social well-being and that its protection, management and planning entail rights and responsibilities for everyone,” as it is stated by the *Council of Europe Landscape Convention* (Council of Europe, 2000). If Jane Jacobs is right to argue that well-used streets are relatively safe from crime, it can be argued that Wu Ming 2’s practice of walking—which occasionally involves trespassing on private property—can be a useful means of understanding, controlling, and safeguarding the territory (Jacobs 1992, 29–54). Indeed, *Il sentiero luminoso* condemns social problems, such as the criminal activities carried out by state-licensed construction companies during the building of the high-speed train lines, the so-called ecomafia (Wu Ming 2

¹⁰ According to Iovino, ecocriticism is “a critical discipline whose major stance is basically an ethical one and which is driven by the idea of literature and culture as ‘ecological,’” in response to a global environmental crisis (Iovino 2010, 30).

2010, 139). By walking near the building site of these infrastructures, Wu Ming 2, through Gerolamo, highlights the destruction of the natural environment that has occurred as a result.

To summarize, *Il sentiero luminoso* shows that the privatization of public land in Italy can be seen as a form of ecological imperialism, internal colonization, or, to use Paul Virilio's terminology, "endocolonialism" (Virilio and Lotringer 2008, 95), which involves an increasing regimentation and regulation of social life along with the transformation of the landscape. To walk is to discover the traces of Italian colonialism (Wu Ming 2 2016, 149), to recognize the legacy of Fascism, and to acknowledge the spaces of marginalization that are created within a neoliberal society; it is also a practice that allows Wu Ming 2 to think about the condition of those who move out of necessity, such as economic migrants.

Torpignattara: Hybrid Narrations of a Liminal Space in *Su due piedi* and *Al palo della morte*

Santoro's perambulations throughout Calabria, as described in his 2012 text *Su due piedi*, start in Torpignattara, a multicultural neighborhood on Rome's periphery (Broccolini 2014, 81–98), which also features in his text *Al palo della morte* (At the Death Post, 2016). *Al palo della morte* was published by Edizioni Alegre in the series "Quinto Tipo" ("Fifth Kind"), edited by Wu Ming 1. This series publishes texts that hybridize different genres, a stylistic trait that characterizes Wu Ming's own production. The central role of Torpignattara in Santoro's works underlines his attention to the urban and social landscapes where immigrants live. The title *Al palo della morte* refers to an expression used in Carlo Verdone's film *Un sacco bello* (*Fun Is Beautiful*, 1980) to indicate the border between Rome's center and its periphery. There are several similarities between *Su due piedi* and *Al palo della morte*, most notably that both are hybrid texts: *Su due piedi* is a travel diary and a guidebook; *Al palo della morte* is the novelistic report of the killing of a Pakistani refugee Muhammad Shahzad Khan, which includes an analysis of the media coverage and reflections on Rome's urban peripheries (Santoro 2016, 169–172). It is therefore useful to analyze how Santoro portrays the experience of space in *Al palo della morte* before discussing *Su due piedi*.

The mixture of direct experience and historical and sociological considerations Santoro provides in *Al palo della morte* is reminiscent of the epistemological method he uses to describe Calabria in *Su due piedi*, a text in which he seeks a middle ground between study and direct experience, "*sguardo dall'alto e ottica di strada*" (Santoro 2013, 154; "what is seen from above and at the street level"). The essayistic dimension of these narrative texts—they both present a list of references and suggested reading—is not surprising since Santoro writes about politics for the newspaper *Il manifesto* and is the author of nonfiction texts and essays on politics and the media (Santoro 2013; Santoro 2014). Another relevant similarity between the two texts is that Santoro testifies to his direct experience and even tells his readers that "tutto ciò che leggerete si basa su fatti *reali*. Vi ho assistito con i miei occhi" (2016, 9; "everything that you are about to read is based on real facts. I saw it with my very own eyes"). Walking is presented in *Su due piedi* and *Al palo della morte* as a method for rethinking space; indeed, it is as a result of walking that Santoro makes the argument in *Al palo della morte* that Torpignattara should be considered in conjunction with the Pigneto neighborhood.

The Pigneto area was built by immigrant workers from Southern Italy in a construction process that was only partly legal (Scandurra 2007). Most recently, new inhabitants of the area have come to outnumber longtime residents. The newcomers to Pigneto generally fall into one of

two groups: young gentrifiers or foreign workers. *Al palo della morte* and *Su due piedi* present the process of gentrification in a similar way to Rowland Atkinson and Gary Bridge, who argue that

[c]ontemporary gentrification has elements of colonialism as a cultural force in its privileging of whiteness, as well as the more class-based identities and preferences in urban living. In fact not only are the new middle-class gentrifiers predominantly white but the aesthetic and cultural aspects of the process assert a white Anglo appropriation of urban space and urban history. (2005, 2)

In short, gentrification is presented in Santoro's work as a form of urban colonialism.

However, Santoro does not portray the Pigneto neighborhood as entirely gentrified as Michele Masneri's novel *Addio Monti* (Goodbye Monti, 2014) and articles such as Andrea Minuz's "L'invenzione del luogo. Pasolini e il Pigneto" ("The Invention of a Place. Pasolini and Pigneto," 2015) do. Santoro argues that immigrants created their own shops, revitalizing run-down areas such as Pigneto. As a consequence, these neighborhoods became appealing places to open new upscale bars and restaurants. Moreover, the presence of immigrants offered cheap workforce. Pigneto has become a gentrified area in terms of nightlife (Santoro 2016, 101), but it is largely an immigrant neighborhood during the day. Santoro witnesses the mutual support among immigrants (ibid., 39), and the violence against them (ibid., 37), which includes the ominous "bangla tour" (ibid., 71), the devastation of shops owned by those of East Asian descent. Santoro therefore criticizes the "frequentatori del Pigneto, soprattutto quelli che surfano sugli eventi senza vivere il quartiere veramente, [che] sono convinti di trovarsi di fronte a una specie di Tribeca all'amatriciana" (ibid., 2016, "those who go to Pigneto, especially those who skate the surface of the place without living in the neighborhood, who think they are experiencing a kind of Roman Tribeca").

Rather than presenting immigrants as a unified group, Santoro shows that the Muslim community living in Pigneto and Torpignattara is "attraversata da conflitti e inquietudini" (ibid., 97; "besieged by conflicts and concerns"). For instance, he translates some of the graffiti in Urdu that he finds on the walls of Torpignattara, and he discovers with great surprise that it says, "picchia l'imam" (ibid., 96; "beat the imam") and "più eroina, meno Peroni" (ibid., 97; "more heroin, less Peroni beer"). According to Santoro, these are acts of rebellion from young Muslims against their parents. A direct experience of the neighborhood through walking allows Santoro to look closer at graffiti that he would have otherwise disregarded.

The attention to the experience of migration characterizes both *Al palo della morte* and *Su due piedi*. In *Al palo della morte*, the migrants and those who fight for the "diritto all'abitare" (ibid., 121; "right to have a home") are set against settlers, people who are characterized by an "attenzione maniacale per il limitato spazio domestico che ridisegna la città a discapito degli spazi comuni" (ibid., 126; "obsessive attention to the limited domestic space that redesigns the city at the expense of communal space"). Nonetheless, these two groups are not described in dichotomic terms: in analyzing the violence with which the latter group discriminates against newcomers—instead of protesting against what Santoro considers to be their real problems, such as "la speculazione immobiliare" (ibid., 141; "real estate speculation")—*Al palo della morte* argues that migrants are victims of violence because they remind those who moved to the urban peripheries of Rome of their past poverty (ibid., 153). In a further parallel between old and new

migrants, Santoro refers to some of the controversial measures introduced to regulate internal migration and emigration, and describes the forced relocation of people from the city center to the suburbs in 1924 (ibid., 142), the campaigns against emigration (ibid., 146–147) and the expulsion of internal migrants who came from the countryside to the city during the Fascist regime (ibid., 145), claiming that old and new migration laws—such as the controversial 2003 Bossi-Fini law—are aimed at exploiting workers.

Al palo della morte and *Su due piedi* illustrate how the presence of migrants has changed Rome's Torpignattara neighborhood. Moreover, Santoro describes walking and the direct experience of space that it involves as an activity that allows him to better understand the discrimination against immigrants in Italy, especially Muslims.

Diasporic Calabria: Migration, Mobility and Belonging in *Su due piedi*

The tension between “home” and “street” described in *Al palo della morte* also characterizes the description of Calabria in *Su due piedi*. *Su due piedi* begins with the author and narrator indicating his present home in Torpignattara and his previous home “cementificata e cresciuta disordinatamente” (“of cement structures and uneven development”), on the periphery of an unspecified town in Calabria, itself a peripheral region geographically and economically (Santoro 2012, 19). Indeed, Santoro defines himself as a “flâneur metropolitan[o]” (ibid., 51; “metropolitan flaneur”), thus recalling the tradition of those who—to use Walter Benjamin’s description of poet Charles Baudelaire’s *flânerie*—wanted to “to turn a boulevard into an *interieur*” (1983, 37). By describing himself as a metropolitan flâneur, Santoro shows that his interest, as a walker, is not in Calabria’s natural environment, which is often at the center of the depiction of this region, but rather on the human intervention on the landscape.

Su due piedi often compares different experiences of mobility, such as walking and migration. The text includes stories related to Calabrian migration to the north of Italy, such as that of the Calabrian workers in Turin who support Juventus F.C., the team owned by their boss, the head of FIAT, Gianni Agnelli (Santoro 2012, 106). Santoro’s condition as an emigrant from Calabria (ibid., 28) is compared to that of those immigrants who “con le dovute proporzioni, cerca[no] di ristabilire la giusta relazione con la [loro] terra” (ibid., 89; “to a different extent, also try to establish the right relationship to their land”). Moreover, after meeting an immigrant street seller called Mustafà who walks with him for a while, Santoro argues that they are both looking for “tempi nuovi che ci consentano di essere in sintonia con queste terre” (ibid., 43; “new times that will allow us to be in touch with this land”). In other words, Santoro connects the provocative and unsettling quality of walking with current anxieties and political questions about immigration. Walking becomes for Santoro a way to meet people who are at the margins of Italian society and to reflect upon different experiences of mobility.

In addition to internal migration, *Su due piedi* presents many stories of emigration from Calabria to other countries. For instance, Cavallerizzo is described as a village reduced by half since half of the population went to “la Germania, l’Australia e le Americhe” (ibid., 32; “Germany, Australia, and the Americas”). The impact on Calabria, as a result of this emigration, is viewed in economic terms (ibid., 83), and in architectural terms, by referring to the returning emigrants who built “grotteschi palazzoni in zone franose” (“grotesque palaces on unstable soil”) in Verbicaro to show their “emancipazione dal passato di povertà” (ibid., 66; “emancipation from an impoverished past”), and the “il villaggio del fanciullo” (“orphanage”) in Cosenza, which “ospitava i figli abbandonati dagli emigranti, da cui l’architettura a forma di imbarcazione

che segnala la speranza del ritorno” (ibid., 87; “housed the children abandoned by emigrants, and was built in the shape of a boat, which denoted hope for their return”). More recent migratory experiences—such as those of young Calabrian archaeologists who work abroad because of the lack of opportunities in Calabria, despite its archaeological richness—are also described (ibid., 120).

A particular kind of emigration discussed in *Su due piedi* is related to Italian colonialism, which saw Italians arrive in foreign countries as settlers rather than as low wage-earning workers. On the way to Verbicaro, Santoro argues that an insurrection in that village occurred in 1911, which was the same year Italy started the colonization of Libya. Calabrians who went to fight in Africa in those years might have themselves felt colonized by the Italian state (ibid., 47). In doing so, Santoro talks about colonialism from the perspective of Southerners, namely people who, according to Pasquale Verdicchio, are “unrecognised postcolonials,” because of the “preclusion of postcolonial discourse” within Italy about the country’s own unification (Verdicchio 1997, 191).

These multiple stories of migration and mobility through walking depict, to use Arjun Appadurai’s definition, a very complex “ethnoscape,” or “the landscape of persons who constitute the shifting world in which we live: tourists, immigrants, refugees, exiles, guest workers, and other moving groups and individuals constitute an essential feature of the world and appear to affect the politics of (and between) nations to a hitherto unprecedented degree” (1996, 33). *Su due piedi* shows that Calabria has been the “approdo dei migranti di ogni epoca” (Santoro 2012, 134; “destination for migrants in different time periods”), and it tells the story of the Arbëresh communities—refugees who fled Albania between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries as a result of the Ottoman Empire’s invasion—who have lived in Calabria for centuries and still speak Arbëresh dialect (ibid., 63). In one of the most amusing passages of *Su due piedi*, Santoro argues that Calabrians used to play football by dividing the teams into home and visitor. However, this division has now become impossible to make because returning emigrants and residents of immigrant origins participate in the game, creating a “gioco di partenze e ritorni impossibile da decifrare” (ibid., 105; “an interplay of arrivals and departures that is impossible to decipher”).

By presenting the many diasporas that characterize the history of Calabria, *Su due piedi* also challenges the dichotomic representation of the industrialized North and the rural South of Italy. For example, Santoro maintains that the ‘ndrangheta—the Italian Mafia-type organized crime syndicate that is traditionally seen as having originated in Calabria—cannot be said to exist exclusively in Calabria, as it is equally present in the rest of the country, especially in the richest regions (ibid., 150). The ‘ndrangheta is the “prima azienda nazionale” (ibid., 148; “the leading Italian business”), because it can be found in the North and in the South, within the same capitalist economy. Because of this, Calabria is described as one of the “marginì che si fanno centro” (ibid., 20; “peripheries that become centers”), and Santoro argues that “capire la Calabria permette di capire il resto del paese” (ibid., 99; “to understand Calabria is to understand the rest of the country”). By revealing the interconnectedness of Northern and Southern Italy, *Su due piedi* contests the dominant depiction of the “backward” South as an obstruction to the modernization of the industrial North.

However, Calabria is not only connected to the North of Italy but also to North Africa. For instance, *Su due piedi* compares the grassroots opposition to real estate speculation and overdevelopment in Calabria to the “voglia di rivolta in Tunisia and Egitto” (“desire for rebellion in Tunisia and Egypt”) in the early 2010s (ibid., 125). *Su due piedi* describes the connection

between places and events that are neither contiguous nor seemingly connected in mainstream media, such as the protests taking place on the northern and the southern shores of the Mediterranean Sea. In other words, Santoro's experience of walking allows him to rethink local and global geographies and their interconnectedness.

Walking as an Epistemological, Postcolonial, and Ecocritical Practice

Wu Ming 2 and Santoro's texts on walking, geography, and space discuss important themes of our contemporaneity, including citizenship, democracy, environmental justice, social exclusion, and globalization. Walking is a response to disenfranchisement; both Wu Ming 2 and Santoro criticize the decisions that have led to the reorganization of common space based on the requirements of automobiles, high-speed trains, and private businesses. An on-the-ground experience of space is germane to understanding the destruction of the natural landscape that has occurred because of the neoliberal organization of space, and to meeting people who are marginalized in Italy.

Wu Ming 2 and Santoro present themselves or their autobiographically inspired alter egos as dreamers, travelers, cultural historians, and novelists, who discuss what they have learned or unlearned from the streets and the experience of walking. Therefore, walking—along with social and historical research—is integral to these writers' artistic processes and their activism. Wu Ming 2 and Santoro understand that writing must be accompanied by the first-hand experience of a space as opposed to being generated solely from imagination, research, and theory. In fact, both are needed; to rely exclusively on experiential knowledge or on the imagination, would be to risk reducing “la complessità del mondo” (“the complexity of the world”) to “una sola dimensione” (Wu Ming 2 2016, 102–3; “a one-dimensional reality”). Santoro cites how Wu Ming 2's approach to writing and walking taught him that, “Camminando si raccolgono testimonianze, ma per interpretarle e metterle in prospettiva serve un punto di fuga, uno sguardo dall'alto che permetta di andare oltre la contingenza del viaggio (Santoro 2012, 56; “By walking one collects testimonies, but in order to interpret them, to put them in perspective, a focal point, an overarching vision that allows one to go beyond the contingency of travel, is needed”). *Il sentiero luminoso* and *Su due piedi* propose a way of comprehending the multilayered intricacy of space, its social output, and the historical conditions of its existence. These two works envision the landscape as a “text” through which, to quote Iovino, “we read embodied narratives of social and power relations, biological balances and imbalances, and the concrete shaping of spaces, territories, human, and nonhuman life” (2016, 3).

To quote Doreen Massey, Wu Ming 2 and Santoro's experience shows that “places do not have single, unique ‘identities’; they are full of internal conflicts [...] a conflict over what its past has been (the nature of its ‘heritage’), conflict over what should be its present development, conflict over what could be its future” (Massey 1994, 155). As the textual analysis has demonstrated, this way of experiencing the landscape reveals the heterogeneity of the nation in social, spatial, and historical terms. The resignification of the Italian landscape seems particularly relevant to rethinking national belonging, since

National identities are co-ordinated, often largely defined, by “legends and landscapes,” by stories of golden ages, enduring traditions, heroic deeds and dramatic destinies located in ancient or promised home-lands with hallowed sites and scenery. The symbolic activation of time and space, often drawing

on the religious sentiment, gives shape to the “imagined community” of the nation. As exemplars of moral order and aesthetic harmony, particular landscapes achieve the status of national icons. (Daniels 1993, 5)

Il sentiero luminoso and *Su due piedi* therefore envision walking as an activity which aims to show, to quote Massey, how the “regulation of the world into a single trajectory, via the temporal convening of space, was, and still often is, a way of refusing to address the essential multiplicity of the spatial” (2005, 71).

Walking and experiencing the land causes Wu Ming 2 and Santoro to reflect, not only on the destruction of the natural environment, but also on accessibility, identity, mobility, civil rights, and nationality. Both texts refer to Italian colonialism (Santoro 2012, 47; Wu Ming 2 2016, 149), discussing how walking enables one to discover traces of the colonial enterprise, whose legacy is still present in today’s Italy (Andall and Duncan 2005; Proglia 2011).¹¹ These few references to colonialism suggest the need for a broader engagement with the legacy and memory of this experience, which requires a discussion of the legacy and memory of Fascism, the impact of Italy’s industrialization, the racialization and marginalization of immigrants, the gentrification of urban spaces, the representation and conceptualization of space, and the stories of the multiple transnational migrations that characterize the world in which we live.

Walking is presented as a useful practice to rethink space from a postcolonial perspective in at least four ways. First, the two autobiographically inspired narrators of these texts present themselves as part of a community. Walking reveals “the structure of (non) relation to the other” that the privatization and the neoliberal organization of space impose on the communities which Wu Ming 2 and Santoro feel part of (Marzec 2007, 18). *Il sentiero luminoso* and *Su due piedi* suggest that solitary walking can have public consequences, because their texts see the individual as being inescapably enmeshed in a network of relationships.

Secondly, walking helps to position the writers, elucidating their relationship to the territory, as well as acknowledging their privilege compared to noncitizens who are crossing the same geographic area. In an influential article, Roberto Derobertis has argued that it is essential for those who study postcolonial cultures in Italy to define:

da dove parliamo “noi,” che con il postcoloniale in Italia ci stiamo confrontando? [...] Questo “partire da me” è per sottolineare la necessità di interrogarci [...] sui “luoghi” dai quali facciamo il postcoloniale (italiano), tenendo sempre nel quadro storie, lingue, mappe, territori, posizionamenti di genere, razza e classe. (2014)

(from which position do “we”—those who are analyzing postcolonial Italy—speak? [...] This “starting from me” means to underline the importance of interrogating [...] the “spaces” from which we conceive the (Italian)

¹¹ It should be noted that Wu Ming 2 is indeed a writer who is very committed to engaging in a critical discussion of the legacy and memory of colonialism, both in his textual production (which includes the novel *Timira* [Wu Ming 2 and Antar Mohamed 2012], several blog entries in *Giap*, and the scholarly article “Landscape: Somalia as Seen in Italian Colonial Literature” [Wu Ming 2 2018a]) and in his public engagement activities. These activities include walks in cities like Bologna (Wu Ming 2015) and Palermo (Wu Ming 2 2018b) that aim to rethink the urban landmarks that celebrate colonialism.

postcolonial, bearing in mind stories, languages, maps, territories, and positions of gender, race, and class.)

When reflecting upon “the “spaces” from which we conceive the (Italian) postcolonial, *Il sentiero luminoso* and *Su due piedi* take a transient position, one that involves mobility and echoes the practices of errantry that Édouard Glissant recognizes as important in order to break the link between identity and territory (1997, 20).

Thirdly, *Il sentiero luminoso* and *Su due piedi* resemantize “exploration.” According to David Pinder, exploration “is associated with voyages of discovery and the construction of geographical knowledge, but it also has a disturbing history in terms of the power relations through which it has been conducted” (2005, 388). Although the texts focus primarily on a male autobiographically inspired experience and on a revisitation of Italian history, they criticize a patriarchal/masculine conception of the world (Santoro 2012, 44, 87; Wu Ming 2 2016, 152–153) and describe the national space as entangled with transnationality, mobility, and migration. In other words, these texts aim to reveal the ways in which hierarchies of power are established through the organization of space.

Lastly, Wu Ming 2 and Giuliano Santoro present environmental and social activism as intertwined. They discuss how walking allows us to recognize the social and environmental destabilization caused by the capitalist and neoliberal exploitation of the land. *Il sentiero luminoso* and *Su due piedi* not only demonstrate how the neoliberal organization of space creates a system of disciplinary surveillance, subjecting the land “to an overseeing panoptic principle of efficiency” (Marzec 2007, 52), they also show how it creates environmental racism, or “the connection, in theory and practice, of race and the environment so that the oppression of one is connected to, and supported by, the oppression of the other” (Curtin 2005, 145). To cite Stacy Alaimo’s thoughts on environmental and sustainability studies, these texts “cast [...] racism as environmental,” thus “expos[ing] how sociopolitical forces generate landscapes that infiltrate human bodies” (2010, 28). In these texts “ethics becomes not merely social but material—the emergent, ultimately unmappable landscapes of interacting biological, climatic, economic, and political forces” (ibid., 2). Walking allows us to understand how space has been used as a tool of exploitation, to rethink the hierarchies that marginalize migrants and racialized minorities and see nature as a mere background for human action.

Il sentiero luminoso and *Su due piedi* propose walking as a practice that could challenge extant power relations, especially those emerging from the colonization of everyday life by the neoliberal economies which have reduced the amount of physical space in which people can interact (Gregory 1994, 388–92). Walking is presented in *Il sentiero luminoso* and *Su due piedi* as an activity that shows how privatization “overcodes the land, placing on the land a gridwork of oppositions, not only inside versus outside, but by extension, individual against individual, ethnicity against ethnicity, nation against nation” (Marzec 2007, 13). Moreover, it challenges the spatial and temporal distribution, individualization, observation, and regulation of bodies and their movements. As walking reveals the surveillance governing the movement of people and shows firsthand the destruction of the environment and the landscape, *Il sentiero luminoso* and *Su due piedi* call on their readers to walk and critically experience their relationship to the space around them, and to witness the need for continued engagement in environmental and social activism.

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