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Elvira Pulitano

Mediterranean ARTivism

Art, Activism, and Migration in Europe

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To the memory of the people who, throughout these years, have lost their lives while crossing the Mediterranean Sea in search of freedom and a dignified life away from wars, military dictatorships, political instability, famine, and difficult living conditions.

To the survivors of these dangerous journeys, as they are bravely rebuilding their lives and a new home in Europe. May they continue to find the courage to tell their stories for the next generations and for all of us living in such ferocious times.

To the power of art to tear down walls and erase borders and to all the people who passionately and courageously fight for people's right to move and against all forms of discrimination.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book officially began in the fall of 2017 when I was granted a one-year sabbatical from my teaching institution, California Polytechnic State University (Cal Poly), San Luis Obispo. This was complemented by a Research, Scholarship, and Creativity Grant (RSCA), also funded by Cal Poly. Yet my thinking around issues of migration in the Mediterranean has a longer history, one inevitably linked to my own history of migration to the United States. It was during my transatlantic journeys between Sicily, my native place, and California, my current home, that I began to think about mobility, freedom of movement, and the intricate history of Mediterranean crossings, often wondering what has happened to the country I left more than 20 years ago. Writing this book has been a sort of homecoming, though a bittersweet one, and I am indebted to so many people for taking me on such an incredible journey.

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To the victims and survivors of the Mediterranean crossings goes my most heartfelt homage and humbling acknowledgment. This book is dedicated to them all.

PRAISE FOR *Mediterranean ARTivism*

“Based on first-hand field research in the central Mediterranean, Pulitano’s volume subverts current discourse of migration in Europe by emphasizing the Black Mediterranean experience and its porous entanglements with art, activism, and belonging. A blueprint for co-habitation and solidarity in war-ravaged Europe.”

—Alessandro Triulzi, *Professor of African Studies at the
Università di Napoli L’Orientale, Italy*

“There are those who try to fix problems in the frame that generated them and predictably fail. And there are others who understand that reinventing the frame creatively and by art is an effective political action indeed. Elvira Pulitano’s book provides an accurate, rich and long-awaited account of ARTivism related to Euromediterranean migration, questioning geopolitical assets and challenging disciplinary boundaries.”

—Clelia Bartoli, *Professor of Politics of Migration and
Human Rights, University of Palermo, Italy*

CONTENTS

Entanglements: Some Reflections on Migrant Journeys	1
Fault Lines: The Mediterranean’s “Burning” and the Human Rights Debate	23
Island(s): Lampedusa as a “Hotspot” of EU Border Policies	43
Stones and Water: Monuments and Counter-Monuments	75
Boats and Cemeteries: Landscapes of Memories	103
Eyes, Sounds, Voices: Cinematic Representations of the Lampedusa Borderscape	135
Heritage Spaces and Digital Archives: ARTivist Acts of Resistance	163
Watery Confluences: Toward a (Trans)MediterrAtlantic Discourse—Critical Reflections on <i>The Foreigner’s Home</i> (2018)	201

<i>“La mia terra è dove poggio i miei piedi (My Land Is Where I Lay My Feet”): ARTivism and Social Enterprise in Palermo, Sicily</i>	221
--	-----

Index	229
-------	-----

LIST OF FIGURES

Island(s): Lampedusa as a “Hotspot” of EU Border Policies

Fig. 1	E. Pulitano, Santuario Madonna di Porto Salvo, Lampedusa	44
Fig. 2	E. Pulitano, Statue of Madonna di Porto Salvo, Lampedusa	45

Stones and Water: Monuments and Counter-Monuments

Fig. 1	E. Pulitano, <i>Porta d’Europa</i> , Lampedusa	76
Fig. 2	E. Pulitano, <i>Porta d’Europa</i> -dedication, Lampedusa	78
Fig. 3	E. Pulitano, <i>Porta d’Europa</i> , Lampedusa	80
Fig. 4	E. Pulitano, <i>Porta d’Europa</i> , Lampedusa	82
Fig. 5	E. Pulitano, <i>Porta d’Europa</i> -vandalized plaque, Lampedusa	83

Boats and Cemeteries: Landscapes of Memories

Fig. 1	E. Pulitano, Abandoned Boats, Lampedusa	105
Fig. 2	E. Pulitano, Abandoned Boats, Lampedusa	106
Fig. 3	E. Pulitano, Abandoned Boats, Lampedusa	106
Fig. 4	<i>The Lampedusa Cross</i> . (© The Trustees of the British Museum. Reproduced with permission from the artist)	112
Fig. 5	Massimo Sansavini, <i>Touropoperator</i> , “Lampedusa, settembre 2015.” (Reproduced with permission from the artist)	116
Fig. 6	Massimo Sansavini, <i>Touropoperator</i> , “3 ottobre 2013.” (Reproduced with permission from the artist)	117
Fig. 7	Massimo Sansavini, <i>Touropoperator</i> . (Reproduced with permission from the artist)	118
Fig. 8	Massimo Sansavini, <i>Touropoperator</i> . (Reproduced with permission from the artist)	119

Fig. 9	Massimo Sansavini, <i>Touroperator</i> , “Stella Maris.” (Reproduced with permission from the artist)	121
Fig. 10	Massimo Sansavini, <i>Touroperator</i> . (Reproduced with permission from the artist)	122
Fig. 11	E. Pulitano, Cemetery, Lampedusa	125
Fig. 12	E. Pulitano, Cemetery, Lampedusa	126
Fig. 13	E. Pulitano, Cemetery, Lampedusa	127
Fig. 14	E. Pulitano, Cemetery, Lampedusa	131

Heritage Spaces and Digital Archives: ARTivist Acts of Resistance

Fig. 1	E. Pulitano, <i>Porto M</i> , entrance, Lampedusa	166
Fig. 2	E. Pulitano, <i>Porto M</i> , entrance, Lampedusa	167
Fig. 3	E. Pulitano, <i>Porto M</i> , Lampedusa	173
Fig. 4	Giacomo Sferlazzo, “Nostra signora delle coperte isothermiche,” <i>Porto M</i> , Lampedusa. (Reproduced with permission from the artist)	174
Fig. 5	E. Pulitano, <i>Porto M</i> , Lampedusa	176
Fig. 6	E. Pulitano, <i>Porto M</i> , Lampedusa	177
Fig. 7	Giacomo Sferlazzo, “Totem 2010,” <i>Porto M</i> , Lampedusa. (Reproduced with permission from the artist)	179

Watery Confluences: Toward a (Trans)MediterrAtlantic Discourse—Critical Reflections on *The Foreigner’s Home* (2018)

Fig. 1	<i>The Foreigner’s Home</i> , Promotional Photo. (Reproduced with permission)	204
Fig. 2	Toni Morrison. Still from <i>The Foreigner’s Home</i> . (Reproduced with permission)	205
Fig. 3	D’ de Kabal. Still from <i>The Foreigner’s Home</i> . (Reproduced with permission)	206
Fig. 4	<i>The Raft of the Medusa</i> , Louvre. Still from <i>The Foreigner’s Home</i> . (Reproduced with permission)	206
Fig. 5	Edwidge Danticat and Toni Morrison. Still from <i>The Foreigner’s Home</i> . (Reproduced with permission)	209

“La mia terra è dove poggio i miei piedi (My Land Is Where I Lay My Feet”): ARTivism and Social Enterprise in Palermo, Sicily

Fig. 1	<i>Moltivolti</i> , Palermo. Map, “La mia terra è dove poggio i miei piedi.” (Reproduced with Permission)	222
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