INTRODUCTION

The Invisible City

THE CITY'S MULTIPLICITY

> For those who pass it without entering, the city is one thing; it is another for those who are trapped by it and never leave. There is the city where you arrive for the first time; and there is another city which you leave never to return. Each deserves a different name; perhaps I have already spoken of Irene under other names; perhaps I have spoken only of Irene. (Calvino 1974: 125)

This is how Marco Polo describes the city of Irene to the Chinese emperor Kublai Khan in the book *Invisible Cities*, written by the Italian author Italo Calvino. *Invisible Cities* is a collection of fragments that emerge from a fictional conversation between Marco Polo and Kublai Khan, where the former describes the many cities he has visited during his travels. It is a journey through one and many cities, each leaving an impression on the traveller, who, in his descriptions, attempts to grasp their essence. Through Marco Polo's words, Calvino describes the way cities take different shapes and meanings, how their essence emerges through materialities, experiences and fantasies. Cities – and, more generally, places – thus emerge through a prismatic polyvocality of atmospheres, imaginations, affects, materialities and histories, which encounter each other and disappear, only to reappear unexpectedly. While each fragment in Calvino's work is given a different name and seems to portray a different city, the descriptions may also all refer to the same city, experienced from different perspectives. Each description narrated by Marco Polo embodies the tension between reality and imagination, between that which the traveller has seen and experienced and that which has remained hidden, between the way the city is described

and its material existence. Embodying these tensions is what shapes these 'invisible cities'.

Just like the 'invisible cities' described by Calvino, the city explored in this book also contains multiple cities within itself. The city takes different shapes, visions come in and out of view, as multiple processes of knowledge-production promiscuously intersect, contaminate each other, flow one into the other. Crucially, this work seeks to explore how that which remains hidden, invisible or presents itself as an absence – interpreted here as spectrality – not only participates in the making of the city and, more broadly, in the making of place and in the articulation of a sense of place, but ultimately comes to constitute them. 'Invisible cities' – both the one described in this work and the ones narrated by Calvino – emerge in multiple configurations: as plans, as desires, as ideas or concepts, in their affective atmospheres, in the materiality of their urban spaces and in their many timespaces. Contemplating a city's 'spectral within' invites reflections on how a city is known and what it feels like through its multiplicity.

'THERE IS NOTHING HERE': THE CITY OF LATINA

The city in question, unknown to many, lies south of Rome and north of Naples, in central Italy. It is today called Latina; it was once known as Littoria, and did not exist in its current form before 1932. Its foundation remains indelibly tied to the Italian Fascist regime and its ideology. Its population is close to 127 thousand people. This city has been struggling with finding its place in people's lives and, more broadly, within Italy. At the question 'What is Latina all about?', I was told countless times 'nothing'. It was haunting to hear it over and over again. I had originally been interested in Latina's Fascist heritage, in its buildings and in their development, in the way they had been used and renovated, in the way Latina's inhabitants experienced them. However, once I arrived in the city, I quickly realized that there was very little interest in the buildings. This was complicated further by the political crisis that engulfed the city council at the time of my arrival. A vote of no confidence had ousted the mayor, with a prefectorial commissioner (*commissario prefettizio*) taking his place in administering the city. Access to institutional archives, documentation and personnel became even more problematic and lengthy than it would have been in more normal circumstances. I thus began asking more general questions about the city, what people thought of it, how their life was there. As a refrain that I found difficult to understand then, they often repeated two hyperbolic statements. They would either dismiss my interest by saying 'There is nothing here' or they would reach to the other end of the

hyperbole, 'There would be so much to say here', which, however, almost inevitably led to silence and a change of topic – or even worse, a sudden interruption of the conversation – when I asked them to elaborate on their immediate reaction to my question.

The idea that I was interested in Latina was to many, to say the least, peculiar and was often received with silences, shrugs, or ironic and cynical remarks. What made this all the more pervasive was the frequency and repetitiveness with which these remarks were uttered, by all sorts of people. One day, I walked into a restaurant managed by migrants who had been in the neighbourhood for a very long time. A young man, still attending high school, was in charge of taking payments from departing costumers. I stopped and we talked briefly. He had an unmistakably local accent, but spoke Chinese with what I took to be both the restaurant's owner and his dad. We chatted about the fact that I lived in the UK, that I was doing my PhD and had returned to do fieldwork in Latina. He looked puzzled. I explained what anthropology was and what anthropologists were interested in (something I had to do often when mentioning my research), and then explained that I was interested in understanding what it meant to live in Latina. He looked even more perplexed. After a short pause, he emphatically said: 'Listen to me. There is nothing here, there is nothing to study'. I asked him why he thought so, as I wanted to know more about his response. He looked at me, unsure how I could not understand such an obvious fact and repeated, 'There is nothing here', as if it was the most evident fact about Latina. These reactions were bewildering and begged the question of how to understand, analyse and write about this 'nothing' by which so many people characterized the city. They raised the question of what shape Latina took through this nothingness and how to go about exploring it.

I became increasingly interested in finding the meaning of 'nothing' and how my interlocutors felt about it, how it encapsulated a 'poetics of place' (Stewart 1996: 95). This 'nothing' lingered in the air, in the silences that interrupted conversations, in empty spaces, in Latina's atmospheres, in the experience of the city; it haunted the very being and becoming of the city. Latina emerges in the ever-changing and yet stagnant impasse of being 'in-between'; it is 'already lost or still ahead, just beyond reach' (ibid.: 16), while bearing in itself an alternative mode of existence (Povinelli 2011). This is because nothing is never *just* nothing; it is a 'no-thing': a perceived and existing absence, a residue rather than a void; by contrast, 'absence is' (Papadopoulou 2016: 370). The 'nothing' my interlocutors so frequently used to describe Latina was that which haunted the city; it acquired a density, it was tangible and felt. It was this 'nothing' that was holding within itself my interlocutors' feelings, experiences, lives and perceptions of the

city. I discovered how 'nothing' was an attunement that amounted to *something* (Berlant 2011; Stewart 2007); it was a constant vibration, a flow moving between bodies, materialities, environments; it was spectral. It erupted in narrative forms and through the charge of affects; it belonged to multiple pasts as much as to multiple futures.

Latina was once only imagined, a vision drawn, materialized in two dimensions. In 1932, the architect Oriolo Frezzotti was commissioned by the Fascist regime to plan a 'New Town' (Ghirardo 2003). Latina, then called Littoria, was first born on paper: a spiderweb of roads discernible even today when navigating the centre of the city. Long threads ramify beyond the concentric heart, reaching for decentralized rural settlements (the *borghi*). In its plan first and in its realization later, Littoria/Latina embodied the political and ideological vision of the Fascist regime. It stood as testament of the regime's power, of its autocratic presence. The city's history, materiality and existence were embedded in the regime's political and ideological frames of meaning. The centre of the 'New Town' was delimited by a ring road, aimed at containing its expansion; an urban materialization of the regime's rural policies (ibid.: 105). Buildings were inscribed with evocative emblems and forms, still visible today, with the aim of shaping the lives and the very essence of new settlers. The intimate relationship between Latina and the Fascist regime has contributed to a vision of the city as a perennial 'New Town', often described, explained and interpreted as a by-product of its past, by journalists and scholars alike. All this has left traces – urban materialities, memories, archival documents, photographs – which today intersect, become part of and at times create friction with other ways of knowing the city. It has also crafted an absolute causal relationship that overlooks Latina's immanent multiplicity and the complex experience its inhabitants have of the city.

This emerged as a dense convergence of circumstances, events and praxis that shaped the becoming of my interlocutors' everyday lives in Latina. Some of my interlocutors had been there their whole life, some for decades, others had arrived relatively recently. All held in their lived experience of the city their memories, expectations, desires, visions and imaginations. They were attuned to the city and its idiosyncrasies, to its atmospheres, to the affective charges Latina exuded (see Navaro-Yashin 2012 on Cyprus). They *knew* what it *felt* like to live in Latina. They were in the city as much as the city was in them as embodied knowledge. This particular place at the particular time in which I carried out fieldwork is constituted and made unique by my interlocutors' local knowledge, as it is this kind of knowledge (among others) which 'creates places out of *nothing*' (Frake 1996: 248, italics not in the original). This is first and foremost the journey of a city, as all these personal experiences, lives and memories

converge in this place, at this time. As Doreen Massey writes, this is 'a notion of place where specificity (local uniqueness, a sense of place) derives not from some mythical internal roots nor from a history of relative isolation – now to be disrupted by globalization – but precisely from the absolute particularity of the mixture of influences found there' (1999: 22).

The focus on inhabitants' lived experiences of the city has brought to light important themes, making Latina's case study particularly interesting and noteworthy in comparison to other similar ethnographic contexts in Italy – particularly, medium-sized towns. The absent presence of the Fascist past is undoubtedly an important element to be explored. While this is not unique to Latina – Fascist heritage is present in many urban contexts across Italy – this case study is particularly significant for its potential to inquire into a community's experience of life in a so-called Fascist 'New Town'. This raises questions about memory and history-making, the impacts of totalitarian urban planning, and the legacies and repercussions of the regime's internal colonial endeavours. Latina was populated through a series of internal migrations, occurring at various stages of its development. These contribute significantly to Latina's inhabitants' experience of the city and to the way idioms of belonging are articulated in relation to it. While other Italian cities have been subjected to important internal migratory waves, Latina presents a distinctive case due to the socio-political characteristics of its foundation and development. Having been founded only in 1932 meant that the first settlers, brought to the area through a highly organized internal migration orchestrated by the Fascist regime, had only been in the city for twenty years when the second significant internal migratory wave started. Latina thus underwent significant demographic and urban changes in a short amount of time, which have shaped the city and the way it was experienced and narrated by my interlocutors. International migratory waves have also influenced the contemporary city; however, I did not collect ethnographic data in this regard. This was due to a number of reasons, including the fact such an inquiry would have broadened significantly the scope of the current research. Nonetheless, I recognize this as a missing aspect in the present work, one that warrants further exploration.[1]

The recent foundation of the city and its histories and stories of migrations make Latina a unique case study for inquiring into the contemporary presence and expression of localisms in Italy. Anthropologists studying Italy have long observed affiliations to regions and localities (e.g. Silverman 1975). However, Latina's distinctive characteristics invite a re-elaboration of the presence and absence of localisms in contemporary Italy and, more broadly, a reflection on the making of Italy as a nation-state.

ITALY'S PASTS AND THE NATION-STATE: THE *RISORGIMENTO* AND THE *RESISTENZA*

Scholars across disciplines have discussed at length the making of the Italian nation and of the Italian nation-state, focusing on political, social and historical factors (see, e.g., Carle 2012; Ferrarotti 1997; Foot 2003, 2016; Forlenza and Thomassen 2016; Galli Della Loggia 2010; Pezzino 2002). In the discussion that follows, I focus on two key events – the *Risorgimento* and the *Resistenza* – to reflect on how the making of Italy as both a nation and a nation-state shapes the existence of Latina as part of it.

The Italian unification process culminated in 1871,[2] after a series of events that are referred to as the *Risorgimento* (tr. 'Resurgence'). This transition, however, has led to a series of consequences that are still perceived in Italy today and exacerbated several pre-existing issues. The newly formed nation had to contend with other European powers, bearing the 'original sin' of a late unification (Carle 2012: 133). Moreover, Italy lacked in its historical narrative a revolutionary event (such as the French Revolution) where two opposed social groups came into conflict (ibid.: 136). The unification was, rather, promoted by elites, with a marked intervention by foreign powers (Carle 2012; see also Ferrarotti 1997; Forlenza and Thomassen 2016; Galli Della Loggia 2010). This has provoked a discrepancy between the political constitution of the Italian State and the proclamation of an Italian nation, which has been aggravated by Italy's geographical and historical internal divisions (Carle 2012). Before unification, the Italian territory was divided into several states, which differed in their administrative, economic and social organization (Pezzino 2002: 42). As Ernesto Galli Della Loggia describes it, 'politics arrived where history could not arrive' (2010: 142); there was a situation of hyperpoliticization, with a revolution that started from above. Internally, the *Risorgimento* accentuated several significant polarizations and tensions. It did not occur from the centre towards the edges of the country; it started, rather, in the country's extremities. This decentralization of the unification was also aggravated by the 'urban-regional polycentrism' (Galli Della Loggia 2010: 65) which has contributed in part to the expressions of localism still present in Italy today. Localized representations of the *Risorgimento* during the commemorative exhibitions of 1911 maintained this fragmentary character (Gori 2015; see also Connerton 1989 on the importance of commemorations for collective identity). If on one side the founding myth of the *Risorgimento* formed and legitimized the creation of the Italian nation, on the other, because of its fragmentation, Italy's internal conflicts remained a social, political, economic and historical reality (Davis 2012: 505). Thus, the country that emerged at the end of the nineteenth century remained a fragmented one (see, among others, Carle 2012; Cavazza

2012; Dickie 1996; Goddard 1996).[3] The Italian State and the Italian nation are two entities in a difficult relationship with each other. This duality has characterized Italy since its unification (Carle 2012; Davis 2012; Galli Della Loggia 2010) as 'there is a missing encounter between the geography of the State and the geography of society' (Galli Della Loggia 2010: 81).

In many cases, local attachments emerged before a shared sense of national pride (Carle 2012; Castellanos 2010; Ferrarotti 1997). Partly due to this, Italy has struggled to develop sentiments of national belonging.[4] The lack of an Italian national character is highlighted to this day, and is evident also in recent attempts made by the government to reinforce a national sense of belonging as it re-inscribed once again the memory and commemoration of the *Risorgimento* (Castellanos 2010; Foot and Owen 2012; Gori 2015). Erick Castellanos (2010) describes how his interlocutors struggled with defining a national Italian character and recalls how President Ciampi's administration attempted to strengthen a sense of national unity by promoting national symbols, such as the Italian flag and national anthem (2010: 61; however, see Thomassen and Forlenza 2011 and Triandafyllidou 2008 for a different analytical perspective on perceptions of the nation in Italy). The difficulty in identifying common cultural traits and a shared national character is also related to the country's fragmented celebration of the past, which is experienced differently by different communities (see, e.g., Foot and Owen 2012) and, given the importance of commemorations' rituality for the making and unmaking of communities (Connerton 1989), this both reproduces and perpetuates internal divisions. These celebrations have, throughout the decades, taken on different public meanings – especially during the *Resistenza* (the 'Resistance') and the postwar years (Forlenza and Thomassen 2016).

The term '*Resistenza*' indicates the movement mobilized against Nazism-fascism at the end of the Second World War (Ginsborg 1990). The partisans' and Allies' efforts culminated with the liberation of Italy on 25 April, which is still celebrated widely today as the '*Festa della Liberazione*' (Liberation Day). Both the *Risorgimento* and the *Resistenza* have been represented as defining founding moments in the history of the nation as they both provided myths of a unified national sentiment (see, e.g., Carle 2012; Forlenza and Thomassen 2016). However, as it is often discussed in historical, social and political analyses, the *Resistenza* (just like the *Risorgimento*) was characterized by strong internal divisions, manifesting itself as a civil war (see, e.g., Foot, 2016; Ginsborg 1990). Moreover, national and public commemorations and narratives of the *Resistenza* have to contend with individuals' memories (see, among others, Cappelletto 2006; De Nardi 2015, 2016; Mammone 2006; Pezzino 2005; Portelli 2003; Ventura 2010). In fact, the *Resistenza* is a recent event that is still vivid in individuals' memories and

resonates socially and politically in Italy (see Ballinger 2003; Mammone 2006; Ventura 2010). Nonetheless, the process the *Resistenza* forms part of, leading to the end of the Second World War and the end of the Italian monarchy, consisted in a 'rebirth' of the republican nation (Pipyrou 2010: 23).

I will discuss further Italy's localisms (chapter 3) and the legacies of Fascism and the *Resistenza* (chapter 5). Nonetheless, what emerges from this brief overview is that the *Risorgimento* and the *Resistenza* represent not only two key moments in Italy's history but also two periods of profound change (Forlenza and Thomassen 2017). The first one saw the creation of the Italian nation, the second the end of Fascist rule and the advent of the Republic. Both are remembered publicly and have changed meanings throughout the decades, which has complicated further the creation of a single historical national narrative. Latina sits uncomfortably among these historical events and their memorializations, re-elaborations and commemorations. The city cannot claim any connection to the *Risorgimento* because it was built after its occurrence. The city is also strongly associated with the Fascist regime – not only for obvious historical reasons but also because it has been essentialized as *the* 'New Town' of the regime – and, therefore, its past cannot be publicly and collectively shared and celebrated (Miltiadis 2022a). In its relationship with the Italian nation, its fragmentation and its history Latina constantly emerges as 'out-of-time', both in the ways temporality is articulated by its inhabitants (see also the ethnographic case presented by Herzfeld 1987) and in relation to the national historical narratives of the *Risorgimento* and the *Resistenza*. In the first case, negotiations with the 'city with no history' and with ancient pasts produce tensions with a linear and cumulative perception of time. In the second case, the city falls outside normative historical narratives; even if there are multiple local interpretations of national history, Latina's own past emerges as incongruous. This shapes Latina as a place and influences how a sense of place is articulated in relation to it.

THE MAKING OF AN ABSENCE

After this brief historical detour, I return to 'nothing', which is where I begin my theoretical reflections – to explore what 'nothing' holds and how places, temporalities and atmospheres are evoked through it. As my fieldwork progressed, I quickly realized that my questions were often unexpected. They were met with surprise, confusion and bemusement. At times, they remained suspended in the air, acknowledged only by quiet shrugs. Even when people exclaimed that there was a lot to say about Latina or that there was a lot that *should* have been said, most of the time they did not elaborate further. There

was a tension between the two hyperbolic statements: a gap that held what was not being said, what could not be said and what belonged to the non-discursive. Those who did elaborate further spoke of their feelings of displacement or out-of-placeness, they focused meticulously on what was missing in Latina and on what Latina did not have vis-à-vis other places, why they felt the city was somehow incomplete, or why they struggled to make sense of it and feel it as their own. As I engaged more and more with people's reactions, this gap – the hiatus that followed people's abrupt responses – became dense with silences, affects and experiences. It was in this suspended space that my interlocutors expressed their complex relationship with the city.

One day, I met an old friend whom I had not seen in a very long time. We were both born in Latina, though I left the city as a teenager to pursue my education abroad. We had decided to grab a coffee and update each other on what had happened in our lives, a much-awaited homecoming after I had been away for so long. She arrived with her mum, Antonella, whom I was very happy to meet after several years. We were talking about our lives, when I mentioned my research, explaining that I was interested in the city and joking about the fact that in the end I had returned, having left many years before. I was ready to move on and ask my friend about her life, when Antonella interrupted me and suddenly said, 'Latina is a city without a soul'. When I returned home that night and sat down to write my diary, I wondered whether it was Latina's soul that I had been searching for: the core, the essence of being, what made Latina what it was – something that seemed amiss according to Antonella and other interlocutors. It was then that I realized that it was precisely this gap, this absence, this emptiness that characterized my interlocutors' experiences of the city. This was a present absence that was deeply felt, sensorially, affectively and experientially by people. In other words, in our conversations as well as in their silences and reactions they articulated their knowledge of absence (see Yarrow 2010). This knowledge of absence belonged to the knowledge my interlocutors held of the city, within and through their selves. It was through engagements with this gap, with Latina's emptiness, that they both got to know the city and at the same time (re)produced it.

Absence takes many forms in this work. It emerges from that which is materially absent but has remained in the memories and imaginations of the city – buildings and places now gone, like the places many of Latina's inhabitants migrated from, or the farmhouses now destroyed. Equally, absent materialities were invoked in describing matter that should have been present but never was, that which had never materialized but was nonetheless imagined, conjured and deeply missed. Through their material absence, these immaterial presences made themselves felt, known and remembered, as they participated in people's lives and in their experience of the city (Buch

2010; cf. Fowles 2010; Højer 2010; Navaro-Yashin 2009; Renshaw 2010). Places, things and people permeated and affected the way the city was perceived through their absence, in material and tangible ways (Fowles 2010), as well as in their sensorial and affective presence. Absences also emerged as silences, not as an absence of words per se but as a way to communicate through the absence of words (see Pipyrou 2016a, 2020). Silences were a frequent part of dialogues when talking about Latina. They materialized as the expression of Latina's absent 'soul', in the words of Antonella. Silences made absence present, it made it felt, it gave it substance, it gave it space. Finally, absence emerged in the city's deferred existence, in its gaps and hiatuses. It was through these absences that the city was made present; it emerged in the ways my interlocutors perceived it, imagined it and remembered it, beyond its urban materialities alone. As such, absences participate in their own right in the social and political lives of people and places (Bille, Hastrup and Sørensen 2010) – and Latina and its inhabitants are no exception, as absence was constitutive of the very being of the city. In the way it was experienced by my interlocutors and in the way it is presented in this work, the city is thus both absent and present – it could be said that it was present because of its absence and it was absent because of its presence – revealing the non-dialectical and non-linear relationship between the two concepts (ibid.: 13). Rather, absence and presence coexist within the same realm of experience in inextricable arrangements, one comprising the other.

The question that I carried with me throughout the entirety of my fieldwork and in my attempts to analyse the ethnographic data I had collected was how, then, to think about Latina. How was it possible to understand this place when people kept saying 'there is nothing here'? Was Latina after all a 'non-place'? Non-places were first theorized by Marc Augé in 1992 as spaces devoid of identities, relations and histories (1997: 87). These non-places – examples of which include motorways, supermarkets and airports – proliferate in what Augé has defined as 'supermodernity', characterized by the experience of profound solitude. They are mediated through textual materializations of their purpose (ibid.: 96). In its juxtaposition of 'anthropological places' and 'non-places', Augé writes that '"Anthropological place" is formed by individual identities, through complicities of language, local references, the unformulated rules of living know-how; non-place creates the shared identity of passengers, customers or Sunday drivers' (ibid.: 101) and whose relation with non-places is determined by its function. Latina and the experience my interlocutors had of it emerged in opposition to the way Augé has defined 'non-places'. Its 'nothingness', which could have been understood as an expression of being a non-place, was in part, I argue, precisely what made Latina into a place. These absences and spectralities were the substance of the city and through them Latina was saturated by identities, relationships

and histories. As explored in more depth below, Latina was thus both an anthropological and an ethnographic place (as theorized by Sarah Pink).

A concept that may be more suited to describe Latina is that of 'heterotopia', first theorized by Michel Foucault in 1967 (only published in 1984 and translated in 1986). Foucault describes heterotopias in contrast with utopias, as the latter are 'sites with no real place' (1986: 24). Heterotopias, on the other hand, are 'a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested and inverted' (ibid.: 24). He identifies a number of characteristics of heterotopias – namely, that they exist in every culture; they change according to the changing of history; they juxtapose, in one real place, many incompatible places; they unsettle time and they evoke what Foucault calls *heterochronies*; they exist in the tension between exclusion and inaccessibility; they exist in relation to the rest of the space that surrounds them (ibid.: 24–27). This theorization of heterotopias opens up the possibility for this concept to be used to describe a wide range of places (Samuels 2010) and, as a matter of fact, it has already been used in the analysis of Fascist 'New Towns' (Burdett 2000) and the Fascist rural landscape in Sicily (Samuels 2010). In the first case, Charles Burdett (2000) uses the concept of heterotopia to discuss the way in which New Towns came to materialize a Fascist utopia into space – limiting, however, the analytical potential of the term, as noted by Joshua Samuels (2010). Samuels invites the use of the concept as a heuristic device to explore certain characteristics of the Fascist rural landscape in Sicily, where the regime built a number of *borghi* (satellite towns). He, therefore, draws the attention to the way the landscape was shaped following the foundation of the *borghi* and the responses of those involved, such as the government, local families and local Mafia members. His approach to a 'heterotopology of landscape' thus explores the tension between 'order, disorder and alternate-ordering' (Samuels 2010: 75), and in doing so engages with that which remains hidden, or marginal. It is this specific potential of thinking through heterotopia that resonates with my own inquiry into spectrality. However, Burdett (2000) limits the analysis to early writings on the 'New Towns', while Samuels (2010) hints at the life and decadence of *borghi* after the fall of the regime but does not expand on his reflections. In this work, I consider how the Fascist foundation has shaped not only the making of place in Latina but also its contemporary life, how the city emerges as a place *today*. While the idea of heterotopia is certainly useful to think about Latina, I use the concept of spectrality to foreground a reflection on absences and their doings – especially when reflecting on people's relationship with places. It was Latina's present absences, holding the city's very existence, that haunted it and haunted the life of my interlocutors with, within and through it.

OUTLINE

In the next chapter, I explore some of the theoretical questions that emerge in relation to the analysis of places through their spectrality. I engage with some core concepts that are used throughout this work, such as 'haunting' and *aporia*, and I also present some methodological reflections. Chapter 2 presents Latina's histories and the way the city emerges from a polyvocality of stories and experiences. It opens with the meeting of three women, whose stories serve as a starting point to explore the experience of other interlocutors. The biographies of this trio of women are tied to three of the migratory waves that have contributed to populating the city. The lens of migrations serves the purpose of engaging with a 'radical history of place' (Massey 1995), a history that reaches beyond the boundaries of the city's foundation and of the monolithic presence of the Fascist regime, often presented as the city's only historical narrative. By focusing on the ethnography and on the stories told by my interlocutors, the chapter not only provides a historical background for the city, it also shows the way in which the histories of a place constitute and are constituted by the lived experiences and the memories of its inhabitants, while also providing a commentary on the non-linearity of history.

The chapters that follow focus more closely on the making of Latina's spectrality. Chapter 3 contextualizes Latina's place within the nation by engaging with the ethnography on localisms, while proposing a reflection on the performance of places. By discussing my interlocutors' experiences of the presence of different localisms in Latina, it returns to the histories and memories of migrations presented in chapter 2. Here, I propose a definition of localisms as 'performances of relatedness' to foreground their dynamic and distributed qualities. The chapter also explores the ways in which idioms of belonging are articulated through absences, which participate in such performances of relatedness. Discussing the presence and absence of Italian localisms in Latina makes evident one aspect of Latina's spectrality – namely, the fact that the city has an ambiguous relationship with both other localisms and a *Latinense* localism that is associated with it. Latina's case thus, with its peculiarities, invites a reflection on novel ways to think about Italian localisms with a focus on relations.

Drawing on the theme of the 'City and the Nation' introduced in chapter 3, chapter 4 considers the ways in which Latina has been shaped by public interventions that have dramatically changed the city and its territory. I contextualize these as part of a wider discussion on temporality and the making of Latina as multiple 'New Towns'. Moreover, the chapter inquires into the ways in which the timespaces of the city are articulated and experienced differently by institutions, the Fascist regime, governments and

inhabitants. This chapter offers a wider discussion on the presence and absence of multiple pasts and futures, and of Latina's temporal ruptures as sites for the emergence of a spatio-temporal spectrality, revealing the tension between the affective experience of chronological time and time-as-lived.

Reflections on temporality introduce chapter 5, which focuses on the absent presence of Fascism in Latina. I begin by providing some context on the presence of the Fascist past in contemporary Italy and the need to consider the local dimension when inquiring into the ways in which the Fascist past makes itself present in multiple configurations. In the context of Latina, I focus on Fascist heritage as an example of the ways in which the Fascist past is articulated, negotiated and contested locally through multiple perspectives, which cannot be analysed without considering the specificities of Latina's context. The chapter reflects on the importance of adopting an ethnographic approach to inquire into the complex ways in which the Fascist past was articulated by my interlocutors and beyond. A haunting emerges in the absent presence of the Fascist past. However, I argue, it is not just the Fascist past that is haunting but also its immanence in the very existence of the city and my interlocutors' emplacement, as an inevitable relationship with the city.

If chapters 3 to 5 consider the making of Latina's spectrality, Chapter 6, explores the 'City As Lived' and my interlocutors' experience of Latina's multiple hauntings. The chapter inquires into the ways in which Latina emerges as 'Out-of-Place', in the ambiguity of its geographical position and my interlocutors' perceptions of the city's urban environment. It also discusses the ways in which my interlocutors articulated a sense of self (their own and that of others) in relation to a sense of place and of its spectrality. The final part of the chapter attempts to sit with haunting and Latina's *aporias*, through people's perspectives on the city, through the words of my interlocutors and the space that was created as we tried to put Latina into words – a tension that has been carried throughout the writing of this work.

NOTES

1. See, for example, the work of Omizzolo (2019), who has written about the exploitation of the labour of Indian and, more specifically, Sikh migrants in the areas surrounding the city of Latina.
2. The Kingdom of Italy was proclaimed in 1861, while the unification process culminated in the proclamation of Rome as the capital in 1871 (see Forlenza and Thomassen 2016).

3. When talking about Italy's unification and the nation's fragmentation, works often quote a famous remark made after the unification and attributed to Massimo D'Azeglio, an Italian patriot and politician: 'With Italy made, we must now make the Italians' (Carle 2012: 187; Dickie 1996: 19).
4. This is also reflected in some ethnographies (e.g. Silverman 1975), which, in their analyses, characterize local attachments as developing prior to and against a sentiment of pride for the nation.