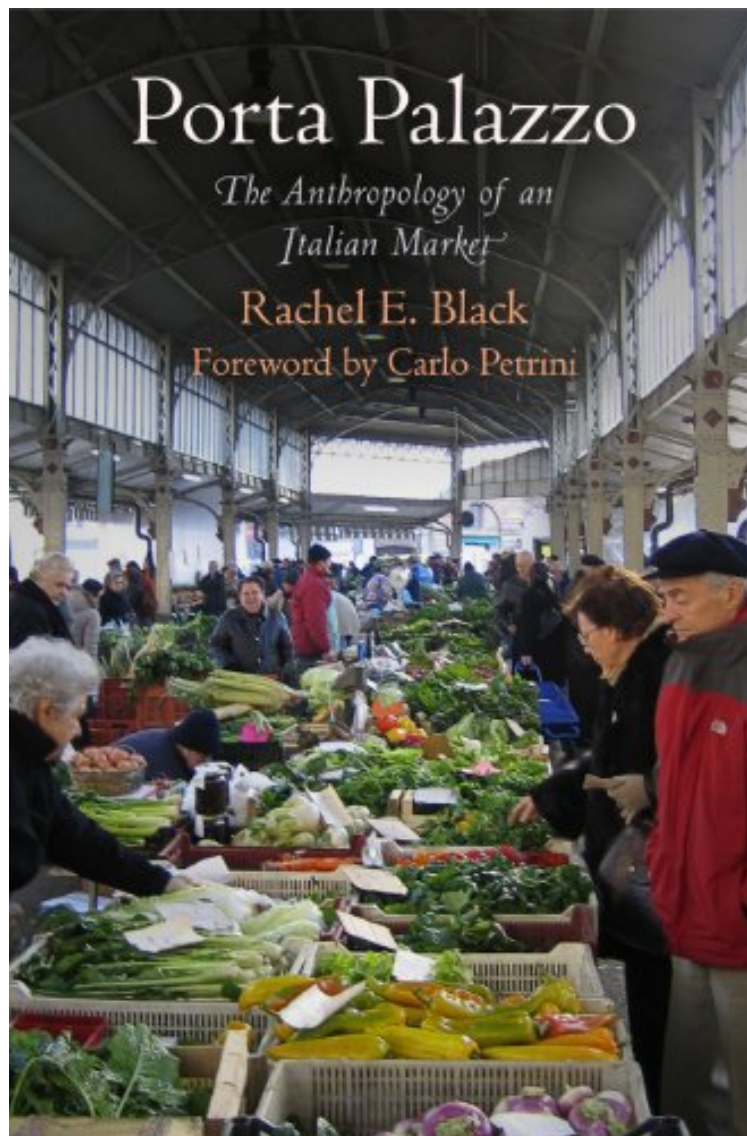


[PDF] Porta Palazzo: The Anthropology of an Italian Market (Contemporary Ethnography)

## Porta Palazzo: The Anthropology of an Italian Market (Contemporary Ethnography)

*Rachel E. Black*

*\*Download PDF | ePub | DOC | audiobook | ebooks*



[Download](#)

[Read Online](#)

#1542721 in eBooks 2012-04-16 2012-04-16 File Name: B00B4FJBY6 | File size: 53.Mb

**Rachel E. Black : Porta Palazzo: The Anthropology of an Italian Market (Contemporary Ethnography)** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Porta Palazzo: The Anthropology of an Italian Market (Contemporary Ethnography):

Porta Palazzo, arguably Western Europe's largest open-air market, is a central economic, social, and cultural hub for

Italians and migrants in the city of Turin. Open-air markets like Porta Palazzo have existed for centuries in Europe; although their function has changed over time; traditional markets are no longer the primary place to buy food; they remain popular destinations. In an age of supermarkets and online commerce, markets offer unique social and cultural opportunities and bring together urban and rural worldviews. These factors are often overlooked in traditional economic studies of food distribution, but anthropologist Rachel E. Black contends that social relations are essential for building and maintaining valuable links between production and consumption. From the history of Porta Palazzo to the current growing pains of the market, this book concentrates on points where trade meets cultural identities and cuisine. Its detailed and perceptive portraits of the market bring into relief the lives of the vendors, shoppers, and passersby. Black's ethnography illuminates the daily work of market-going and the anxieties of shoppers as they navigate the market. It examines migration, the link between cuisine and cultural identity, culinary tourism, the connection between the farmers' market and the production of local food, and the urban planning issues negotiated by the city of Turin and market users during a recent renovation. This vibrant study, featuring a foreword by Slow Food Movement founder Carlo Petrini, makes a strong case for why markets like Porta Palazzo are critical for fostering culinary culture and social life in cities.

"A robust, well-structured and argued book. [Rachel Black] provides us with a fresh, different slant on an urban space that, as she demonstrates, is far from being a place simply for buying and selling food."—*Anthropology of Food*  
"A very readable and accessible ethnography of the Porta Palazzo open-air market in Turin, Italy."—*Journal of Modern Italian Studies*  
About the Author Rachel E. Black is Assistant Professor and Academic Coordinator of the Gastronomy Program at Boston University. She is the editor of *Alcohol in Popular Culture: An Encyclopedia*. Carlo Petrini is the founder of the Slow Food Movement and the University of Gastronomic Sciences in Pollenzo, Italy. His books include *Slow Food Nation: Why Our Food Should Be Good, Clean, and Fair*. Excerpt. copy; Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved.  
Foreword—Carlo Petrini  
The novelist Giovanni Arpino, like myself a native of Bra in the northwestern Italian region of Piedmont, once wrote that, paradoxically, Turin, the capital of our region, is "the most southern of Italian cities." He was referring to the fact that, as a result of the employment-related internal migration of the 1950s and 1960s, a huge population of the city consisted of people from Calabria, Sicily, Puglia, and so on. Today I would go farther and argue that, thanks to more recent immigration from North Africa and the Middle East, of all the major European cities not actually on the sea, Turin is the most Mediterranean. I say this largely because it is a city of markets. Most of its quarters hold large, sprawling open-air affairs every day of the week. Historically speaking, I like to think of markets as links between different realities. It was thanks to them that, for centuries, the civilizations that sprang up along the shores of the Mediterranean met and melded. Mediterranean civilization would never have grown as rich and complex as it is without its markets, meeting places but also venues in which goods, culture, and knowledge were and are exchanged. Today traditional markets not only are of strictly economic importance but also have a clear social and urban significance. Often they are the mirror of the local context in which they are immersed. The largest of all Turin's markets, known popularly as Porta Palazzo, is held in the city's central and enormous Piazza della Repubblica. It is said to be the largest open air market in Europe; that's just the fruit and vegetable section!—and is encircled at the northern end by the baroque architecture of Filippo Juvarra, not a local but a Sicilian from Messina. As my good friend the British food and wine writer Matthew Fort has written in his book *Eating Up Italy*, "This was the one that drew the white-collar workers, blue collars, nursing mothers, provisioning grannies, men, women, Ghanaian and Tunisian immigrants and Romanian gypsies, lovers of horsemeat, tripe and lungs, epicures looking for funghi porcini, men from Sardinia, Sicily and Calabria who needed the ingredients to recreate the dishes of the villages of their birth . . . . The voices were pitched a plangent, sing-song level. The singers were Algerians and Moroccans, as well as Sardinians, Sicilians and Calabresi." Large-scale retail logics have influenced the way in which even the most traditional markets work. The supply chain has been standardized and anonymous hypermarkets—nonplaces par excellence—have entered into competition with the urban markets we know and love. In some cases, the new has come out on top. In Paris, for example, Les Halles used to be the liveliest fruit and vegetable market in the city; now it has been replaced by a shopping mall. But open-air markets still haven't been beaten and, at least in Italy, are the places where people go to buy fresh produce. And they will remain so, if they can continue to ensure an alternative to the standardization of taste. It would be wrong to take the effects of globalization for granted. It may reduce diversity among cultures, but it also promotes diversity inside them. On the minus side, we are witnessing increasing homologation; on the plus side, we are seeing the creation of new diversities. The multiethnic Porta Palazzo market of today is a living symbol of the phenomenon that, regardless of its many contradictions, is becoming a place to understand the reality that surrounds us and to figure out our future—especially at the table. But enough of the musings of an Italian who has frequented Porta Palazzo since he was a kid. In the book you are about to read—part anthropological investigation, part personal memoir—you will find out what a non-Italian has to say about the place. It is a particular source of pleasure for me that the non-Italian in question is Rachel Black, a Canadian anthropologist who has lectured at the University of Gastronomic Sciences in Pollenzo, near Bra, founded by Slow Food in 2004 to encourage the building of an organic

relationship between gastronomy and agriculture. I found her insights profound and stimulating, and I am sure you will too.