The political and administrative fragmentation of Italy and the multiplicity of cultural centres in the peninsula have meant that historians of Italian printing have always been aware of the problems in charting the geographical spread of printing, long before the ‘spatial turn’ in the Humanities put space at the centre of attention. Giuseppe Fumagalli’s *Lexicon typographicum Italiae* (Florence, Olschki), a general topographical dictionary showing the first appearance of printing in various places throughout Italy, which was first published in 1905 and is still useful today, shows how far back in time the study of the geographical spread of printing goes in Italy, a study which emerged in the thriving context of local history and local studies. The early concentration of printing and publishing activity in Venice, the city which would maintain a leading role in the Italian book trade until the end of the eighteenth century, did not lead to the disappearance of printing in the rest of the country. On the contrary, the men who worked in the Italian book world constantly moved their activities from town to town (though southern Italy and the islands remained predictably peripheral), leaving returning not only to Venice, but also to the city which became second in importance in the Italian market: Rome.

The work reviewed here is not the first dictionary offering a series of extended biographical entries on Italian printers, publishers and booksellers, though it is the first to override the traditional cut-off point at the end of the
sixteenth century, comprising as it does information pertaining to the fundamentally important period in Italian history stretching from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries. Similar works, albeit on a reduced scale, first started to appear in the 1970s. A marked shift in the significance of this kind of repertoire occurred with the publication of the *Dizionario dei tipografi e degli editori italiani* (Milan, Editrice Bibliografica, 1997), which included numerous entries based on original bibliographical and especially historical and archival research. But publication was interrupted (never to be resumed) with the first volume covering the letters A to F.

One of the most authoritative sources of biographical information on Italian printers, publishers and booksellers remains the *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani* (Rome, Istituto dell'Enciclopedia Italiana), which began in 1960 and is still in progress (80 volumes have been published so far, reaching the letter P; free access of entire content is also available online). However, in *DBI* only the major figures in the Italian book world are included; any sense of the minor, often extremely minor, figures, who were characteristic of the vital nature of the trade, is lost.

While the present work adopts the structure of traditional biographical dictionaries (though it extends the treatment of individual figures to include families and, especially, business partnerships), the criteria for inclusion are rather different from the ones found in previous works of this kind. Its focus is a very specific one: only those figures in the book trade are included who operated in different places over the course of their careers. In his introduction, Marco Santoro explains that the reasons for this mobility – leaving aside enforced migration due to natural disasters or epidemic outbreaks – are essentially threefold: escape from oppressive control and censorship; the undertaking of commissions and contracts for work from private and public institutions located elsewhere; and the expansion of activity on a larger scale, driven by entrepreneurial/commercial imperatives. A busy and wide-ranging picture of printers’ and publishers’ mobility is built up not only within Italy, but throughout Europe, with especial but not exclusive reference as far as Italy is concerned to other neo-Latin and Catholic countries. This overall picture of mobility contains different elements that can be interpreted in various ways. We find small-scale artisans on the move in search of new work, as well as innovative and energetic publishers looking to expand, especially during the various crises of market saturation in Venice, but there are also the great firms such as Giolito, Giunta, Gabiano or Scoto, whose commercial networks sought to develop new areas of production. Thus the phenomenon of mobility in the Italian book trade comprises a large variety of figures, ranging from street performers and