

Civil War', pp. 145-168), analyses the political violence and the violent practices operated by the collaborating Fascist government. She observes that this kind of action – even involving civilians – was aimed at striking the 'enemy within': partisans and everyone connected directly or indirectly to the various Resistance movements.

The core of Luca Baldissara's chapter ('Il massacro come strategia di guerra, la violenza come forma di dominio dello spazio' ('Massacre as a War Strategy, Violence as a Form of Space Dominance', pp. 169-195) is a deep reflection on 'the instrumental rationality, at a military level, of the extensive use of massacre by German troops in Italy' (p. 168). According to the author, 'the need for political and military control of territory, the urgency to activate effective counter-guerrilla tactics, a specific military culture, converge in the period 1943-1945 to define a warlike behaviour which resorts systematically to the politics of the massacre' (pp. 168-169).

These three different perspectives have a common denominator: we must consider this kind of violence not only as an ideological category, but as a form of extreme strategy. Extreme strategies such as this were 'morally justified' in different ways, varying widely between the perspective of total war and the perspective of a war against the Jews, or between the perspective of war against evil or the perspective of the logic of the lesser evil.

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Francesco Catastini

University of Padua

European University Institute

francesco.catastini@eui.eu

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Storia della storiografia italiana. Un profilo, by Giuseppe Galasso, Bari-Rome, Laterza, 2017, 250 pp., €20.00 (paperback), ISBN 978-88-581-2770-4

The first part of Giuseppe Galasso's book outlines the development of historical science in Italy between the fourth century and the early 20th century (pp. 5–12). It was published by the *Istituto dell'Enciclopedia Italiana* in Appendix VIII of its encyclopedia *Il contributo italiano alla storia del pensiero*. The chapter does not merely focus on individual historians but also on the ways in which the political, social and economic contexts influenced the work of professional historians; on the scientific evolution of the discipline and its shift in interest; and finally on the transmission of historical knowledge throughout Italy and Europe. Following this initial approach, the analysis travels back to the medieval and modern eras, when the relationship between Italy and Europe was particularly important for Italian historians. The professionalisation of Italian historians in this period was thus strictly linked to different intellectual networks. Therefore, this section of the book focuses on changes in the historical field, but also on how history became codified and legitimated in Italy through rigorous scientific research. Within this very broad context, Galasso concentrates his attention on the creation of a common culture amongst Italian historians throughout the centuries, which played a crucial part in building an idea of Italy as a nation. In order to develop all

of these topics, Galasso necessarily had to investigate the mechanisms of selection of scientific knowledge and the features of the profession over a *longue durée* and from a 'national' perspective. Through a multifaceted investigation of different historiographies at a national, local and regional level and, occasionally also on the European plane, the first part clarifies the evolution, the continuities and the fractures of historiography in the Italian peninsula.

The second part of the volume turns its attention to the relationships between research institutions and the professionalisation of historians, from the interwar period onwards (pp. 117–236). The analysis is centred on the interaction between the historian's profession and the political context, before and during Fascism, as well as on the interrelations between the scientific community and the codification of the historical field, after the end of the Second World War. It is interesting to note that as early as the late 1940s and the 1950s, historians questioned their own mission as public educators, beyond the portals of the profession. Italian as well as European debates were not centred solely on which sources and methods could conceptualise, contextualise and historicise the pasts, but also whether professional historians should provide a historical understanding of current trends, since history – and in particular contemporary history – often served postwar states' political projects to foster democracy. This approach was highly effective in training men and women capable of understanding the world in which they lived. As Galasso underlines with the ideological polarisation of the Cold War and the rise of nationalist movements in former overseas domains, it is made clear that Europe was no longer the global leader and this, in his words, 'was not always positive' (p. 232). The period between the 1970s and the 1980s witnessed the overlap between the coming of age of the first 'postwar' generation of historians and the passing of the last 'prewar' generation of their masters: each of these 'generations', as Galasso underlines, were united by common experiences rather than by age. The student movements and the increased access to higher education broadened the generation gap and increased the demand to study history from new perspectives. More generally, the chapter investigates how the education of new generations was at the core of the political and cultural agenda of several leading Italian historians at least until the mid-1980s. Galasso emphasises that the analysis of common discussions among Italian historians can help reveal how many, as researchers and teachers, felt it their duty to perform civic education in Italian society by renewing both the research methods and the history-teaching modes. For many of them, civic education had a crucial importance in their scientific production and personal biographies and was linked to the idea of history as a scientific and social commitment.

The results of Galasso's many inquiries into Italian historians and, more generally, his studies on European historiography, formed the background for this book: from *Nient'altro che storia. Saggi di teoria e metodologia della storia* published in 2000, to *Storici italiani del Novecento* published in 2008 and *Storiografia e storici europei del Novecento* published in 2016. In his current work, the author uses two main levels of analysis to interpret historical studies in Italy during the period under study: the first attempts to identify the relation between individual historical research and political and social organisation in Italy; the second focuses on the importance of the *modus operandi* of historians. Overall, this is a significant book which offers a practical and theoretical guide to many aspects of Italian historiography, analysing its capacities for communication and mediation and investigating the transmission of knowledge between different generations of historians. In his last pages, Galasso attempts to face an important question: what is history's role in society today? He believes that history should still have a key role in Italian schools and thus in society: for this reason, historians should fight to defend it, because in doing so, they defend democracy by helping young generations to build freedom of conscience and

ideas. He asserts in conclusion that studying history means fostering innovation by encouraging today's youth to think analytically (p. 221).

Margherita Angelini

Independent researcher

angelini.margherita@gmail.com

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Italian Motherhood on Screen, edited by Giovanna Faleschini Lerner and Maria Elena D'Amelio, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2017, XIII + 293 pp., £80.00, ISBN 978-3-319-56674-0 (hardcover), £63.99, ISBN 978-3-319-56675-7 (eBook).

In the words of the philosopher Luisa Muraro, 'I was born in a culture where women are not taught to love their mothers. Nevertheless, this is the most important knowledge [...]. The beginning we are looking for consists in the ability to love one's mother' (*L'ordine simbolico della madre*, Roma, Editori riuniti, 1992, p. 60). According to Muraro, winning back the symbolic order of the mother translates into reconquering a female genealogy. This would entail being aware of the contribution to knowledge given by other women predating us, so as to give the idea of *partire da sé* (starting from one's own experience) an historical and political insight. Rehabilitating the mother means giving the maternal a generative, and not only reproductive, function.

However, the idea of motherhood does not live in a reconciled space. As signalled by another Italian feminist philosopher, Adriana Cavarero, the philosophical thought has often described the combination of the female inclination towards seduction and eroticism with the maternal tendency as unsettling (*Inclinazioni. Critica della rettitudine*, Milano, Raffaello Cortina, 2013). On the one hand, maternity seems to be an inclination that rejects eroticism and unfolds in the Virgin Mary's act of leaning lovingly towards her son and, on the other, a space of crisis of female identities when the opposite inclination towards the excessiveness of passions comes to the surface, in an unresolvable tension between reassurance and rebellion.

Italian cinema has often explored this plethora of figures of the maternal, maybe in an attempt to build its own matrilineal genealogy, as Lucia Cardone suggests (*Madri*, in 'Quaderni del CSCF', 9, 2013, pp. 204–208), drawing a map revolving around a number of remarkable sites, ranging from the *mater dolorosa* (as it has been defined by Julia Kristeva) to the identification (as ambiguous and problematic as it is) with mother, martyr and nation in the post-war era through the body of Anna Magnani/Pina in *Roma città aperta* (R. Rossellini, 1945). From that very body also stems the definition of a body-landscape as described by Giovanna Grignaffini, where the genealogy mother-daughter unfolds in a maternal landscape of 'rebirth': 'the rebirth of Italian cinema – its immediate recognisability as "other", the tangible sign of its difference – [unfolds] around two marks of attraction, two "landscapes": that of Italy and that of women, both recalled in the name of their profound, unmistakable beauty' (*Racconti di rinascita*, in Ead., *La scena madre. Scritti sul cinema*, Bologna, Bononia University Press, 2002, p. 263).

The essays included in *Italian Motherhood on Screen* stem from this philosophical and historiographical weft, weaving the warp of maternal images in contemporary Italian film and audio-