

of the successes and failures of Italian emigration. On the one hand, emigration could be a powerful economic resource for the motherland, thanks to remittances, the exportation of Italian products and the importation of foreign skills. On the other hand, cases of failed emigration, together with the stigmatisation of Italian emigrants abroad, contributed to a wave of new nationalism and a resurgence of imperialistic theories which led Italy into a new colonial phase, under Giovanni Giolitti, who took Italy into Libya in 1912. The colonial dominance of new territories was necessary in order to direct Italian emigration to an extended Italian homestead; this in turn would make it possible to solve internal political problems and lessen social tensions, such as the Mediterranean question, without the necessity of dealing with foreign politics. This new nationalism developed both in Italy and in the Italian communities abroad. The most striking expression of such nationalism was the major participation of emigrants in the First World War the purpose of which was the annexation of the Irredentist territories. This took the form of considerable economic support by emigrants not only for their own families back in Italy but also to Italian emigrants in other countries during periods marked by disease and natural disaster.

Mark Choate's *Emigrant Nation* is an important contribution to existing scholarship in terms of both Italian emigration and creation of the Italian nation. The book puts Italian emigration firmly into a global context and shows clearly the importance of emigration as a pivotal element in the development of Italian national identity. Choate's use of contemporary documents, together with references to secondary sources, brings historical precision and vivacity to the text and highlights the transnational quality of cultural forms such as music, art, food and literature. Above all, Choate's work has made clear the strong connection between emigration and colonial policy, showing how Italy saw both emigration and colonialism as forms of national expansion.

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**Writing as freedom, writing as testimony: Four Italian writers and Judaism**, by Sergio Parussa, New York, Syracuse University Press, 2008, 219 pp., \$24.95, ISBN 9-780-815631-989

Through the prism of four writers – Umberto Saba, Natalia Ginzburg, Giorgio Bassani and Primo Levi – Sergio Parussa explores the complex ways in which Jewish intellectuals have negotiated the difficult terrain of working sometimes with and sometimes against a dominant cultural legacy. In so doing, he lays out a topography of changing shapes and contours, ranging from the intimate and personal to the historical and mythical.

Before devoting a chapter to each of these writers, Parussa frames the issues in a valuable theoretical introduction grappling with themes of freedom, time, testimony and writing. Ranging from Dante to Adorno, the introduction might confound the general reader without a grounding in philosophy and critical theory, but if she/he continues the rewards are substantial. Parussa opens his introduction using a contemporary art project,

the American artist Mark Dion's 'Tate Thames Dig', to explore themes of history, memory, fragmentation and loss. (The work was installed at Tate Modern in 1999; two images of the installation grace the front and back covers of the book.) Dion simply collected objects found along the banks of the Thames in London (shells, broken glass, ancient fossils and modern bottle caps), combining the disciplines of taxonomy, archaeology and detection to craft a display that, in the words of Parussa, evoke 'not so much a nostalgic fusion of the past and present nor a scientific reconstruction of the past but rather the repetition of an act of remembering in which the past is salvaged from oblivion by means of its reactualization in the present' (p. 2). For Parussa (borrowing an idea from Stefano Levi Della Torre), Judaism does not translate memory into history, but translates history into memory. Memory, in its turn, has an ethical imperative of testimony, or, as Parussa defines it: 'an act of rectifying and healing the past, which tries to prepare and anticipate the future' (p. 3). The four writers dealt with here are particularly rich sources of this complicated interwoven relationship between history and memory.

Parussa argues that Jewish culture is not 'other' but an integral part of Italian culture. Jews, though, were confronted with the problem of dual freedoms: a relative acceptance into the mainstream of Italian political, cultural and social life as well as the freedom to remain distinct, 'at once equal and different, oneself and something other than oneself'. It is no accident that Parussa chooses a woman and a homosexual as representative because twentieth-century anti-Semitism was often linked with misogyny and homophobia.

The chapter on Saba is titled 'The Maternal Borders of the Soul' and traces the writer's relationship to his border-city birthplace of Trieste, an absent father, a lifelong passion for Nietzsche, and psychoanalysis. An essay on Natalia Ginzburg (who had a Jewish father and Catholic mother, and whose first husband, Leone Ginzburg, was killed by the Gestapo in Rome) focuses on the crisis and disintegration of the family in her writing. Deeply rooted in a leftist milieu, toward the end of her life she recounted in an interview how she migrated from Communism to Judaism and Catholicism. As an editor at *Einuadi* in Turin, Ginzburg rejected Primo Levi's first manuscript *Se questo è un uomo* in 1947, but did recognise and publish Anne Frank's diary in an Italian translation in 1954. In a fascinating essay, 'Portrait of a Writer', Ginzburg compares fiction and invention to playing with a basket of kittens, whereas memory and history are compared to taking tigers out for a walk. For Ginzburg, the home becomes a temple and memory becomes a sacred ritual. Giorgio Bassani is framed in the transition from myth to history and a nostalgia for a world now lost. For Parussa, Bassani's 'The Gold-Rimmed Spectacles' and 'The Garden of the Finzi-Contini' are 'bildungsromans that help to construct the Jewish literary character as a historical subject' (p. 105). Primo Levi's character, described by the chapter title 'The Modesty of Starbuck', revelled in its hybridity; Levi once described himself as a 'centaur'.

Saba's ambivalence toward his Jewish heritage, Ginzburg's divided 'loyalties', Bassani's sense of nostalgia and belonging, and Levi's 'secular' Judaism each lay out different relationships between Judaism and writing, Judaism and history, Judaism and memory. For Parussa and these writers, 'Judaism is not a form of objective and fixed identity but the result of a constant negotiation between the subject and the surrounding world: a subjective and mutable sense of belonging in whose fragmentary and imperfect

character lies its richness' (p. 169). *Writing as freedom, writing as testimony* is a brief, gracefully written work brimming with insights and fertile ideas.

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**Ideologia dell'industrializzazione e borghesia imprenditoriale dal nazionalismo al fascismo (1907–1925)**, by Eleonora Belloni, Manduria–Bari–Rome, Lacaita, 2008, 237pp., €18.00

This study examines the history of industrialisation from the Giolitti era up to the mid-1920s. But this is not an economic history, rather – as the title itself explains – it is an analysis of the complex and controversial features of an industrial class's political ideology. The development of Italian capitalism in that period provides the context for the cultural changes that the book analyses. These same changes, above all, appear to cut across social class, since they concern the less wealthy classes, the old agricultural aristocracy as well as the state bureaucracy. But if we pay attention to the ways in which these changes interacted with society, we can conclude that the principal interest for historians lies with that social class that more than any other was an active participant of this industrial takeoff, the one which Eleonora Belloni calls the 'productive bourgeoisie'.

Various types of sources are used in this study, which weaves together different kinds of complementary material. In particular, ample recourse is made to periodicals of the era – such as *Riforma Sociale*, *Rivista delle società commerciali*, *L'Economista d'Italia* and *Rivista di politica economica* – and to essays and technical literature of the period, as well as parliamentary debates and legal processes. An appropriately wide bibliography documents all of this.

This research focuses on the formation of a collective or class consciousness that ran alongside the development of Italy – or more specifically in some of its regions – in the manufacturing sector. The periodisation stems from the identification of the banking and industrial crisis of 1907 as an earlier limit, and from the recognition of the integration of Confindustria into the Fascist system, in 1925, as a later turning-point. In these 18 years, changes at the economic, institutional, social and military level came together to create a coherent, complete and mature ideology for the Italian industrial bourgeoisie, which previously had been limited to a combination of individual and separate visions in the context of a generically liberal political culture.

The first of the four chronological chapters – which covers the period from 1907 to the First World War – is perhaps the widest and most interesting, and sets the tone for the rest of the volume. In particular, the two great debates of the period – concerning credit to industry and commercial policy – are to the fore in this section. A key event in this period was the formation in 1910 in Turin of the National Confederation of Industry (today's Confindustria), the principal organisation representing entrepreneurial interests. It is interesting to note the partially new – and more appropriate – analysis of this organisation here, an organisation that has long been considered as a purely reactionary body born in response to the associative power of the unionised working class. Through reference to