



Life in the south: The Naples journal of Marianne Talbot 1829–32

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Life in the south: The Naples journal of Marianne Talbot 1829–32, edited by Michael Heafford, Cambridge, Postillion Books, 2012, xxvi + 215 pp., £15.00, ISBN 978-0-9558712-1-4

In 1816, Sir George Talbot, a prominent gentleman of London high society, together with his two daughters took up residence on the Continent. Here, apart from occasional periods back in England, they spent the next 16 years. His elder daughter Marianne (1788–1885) recorded their sojourn in personal journals. Of them we do not have any record apart from the very last one designated as Volume 10, which relates the events of the last three years of their life on the Continent. This volume is the content of this fascinating book, brilliantly edited by Michael Heafford. The journal starts on 1 March 1829, when the Talbots lived in Naples, and where Marianne and her family had already spent a couple of years. Thanks to the crucial role played by its port in the Mediterranean, Naples was one of Europe's major cities and home to a considerable and growing British community. The presence of diplomatic staff from several countries, as well as people from all over Europe who had come to visit the magnificent scenery and the classical sites, gave rise to a thriving social life in Naples. In particular, British social life appeared to be effervescent, with lots of social events that brought together both groups and individuals.

At the very beginning of the journal there is a quote by Lord Byron that explains the nature of Marianne's journal. It reads, 'This journal is a relief – when I am tired – as I generally am – out comes this, & down goes everything. But I can't read it over – & God knows what contradictions it may contain. If I am sincere with myself (but I fear one lies more to oneself than to anyone else) every page should confute/refute, & utterly abjure its predecessor.'

The volume clearly shows that it was not written with the intention of a future publication, but more as a personal memoir. Thence, it does not contain a coherent narration but a series of sketches and stories regarding all sorts of episodes of the Talbots' daily life. The events recounted are not fully explained and they often remain obscure. Nonetheless, Marianne's style of writing made up for this obvious lack of clarity. The entries are often short, but always very spontaneous, showing her personality, her interests, but also her concerns about her life, present and future. From these pages we learn Marianne's love for reading, her sad childhood, her interest in fashion and her ideas about marriage. There are some clues regarding some tension between Marianne and both her sister and her father, but the causes of these family issues are never disclosed. The reason for their permanent return to England is also kept hidden. Matters regarding the public arena are recorded alongside circumstances taking place in the more private sphere. A plenitude of characters are mentioned in the journal, since Marianne's best-liked aspect of life on the Continent was the people she had the chance to meet and converse with.

Michael Heafford deserves praise for his decision to keep Marianne's manuscript in its original form without editing out anything. His intervention concerns things like punctuation, spelling and adding missing letters, all of which makes the reading easier. Heafford's attempts to give the background to the events and people mentioned also help the reader to find their way through the extraordinary maze of names. The reader is confronted by a profusion of entries without any ordered interval, containing all sorts of thoughts, records of conversations and anecdotes. Sometimes they are just allusions. Yet the bigger picture delivered by the journal is a captivating one. It is an enticing portrait of the British community in Naples in the 1830s and at the same time of the events and the mentality of an epoch. This book provides a fascinating day-to-day account of a British community abroad. Little is known of the Talbots' life after the

termination of Marianne's journal in August 1832, but this volume will be able to keep alive the memory of this extraordinary period of her and her family's life.

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Xenofobia, sicurezza, resistenze. L'ordine pubblico in una città 'rossa'. Il caso Pisa, by Tindaro Bellinvia, Milan, Mimesis, 2013, 211 pp., €18.00 (paperback), ISBN 978-88-5751-310-2

This book analyses the security policies introduced to tackle immigration and marginalised people such as the homeless in an urban context, and the role of associations and social groups in supporting or resisting those policies. As a case study, Bellinvia takes the small town of Pisa, a site of the 1968 student protests, and a place with a long-standing tradition of solidarity, cooperation and integration. This tradition, largely the product of a 'red subculture' found in the regions of Emilia Romagna and Tuscany, and well established in Pisa, is changing. The author looks at the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century, focusing on 2008 and 2009 when the newly elected Partito Democratico (PD) mayor, Marco Filippeschi, declared war on street sellers and immigrants in general, actions that have come to define his time in office.

The book is in two parts, and includes a preface, an introduction and an afterword. The preface by Salvatore Palidda discusses the similarities in policy making between the centre right and centre left, which have increased since the 1990s, with both emphasising the need for security measures that protect citizens. Bellinvia's introduction provides the methodology and a summary of the chapters. The first part of the book is a theoretical multidisciplinary framework on urban spaces and attitudes to difference. Chapter 1 uses Bourdieu to illustrate the city as a 'field' where fairly stable and unstable forces interact in an attempt to prevail over one another, with foreigners kept on the margin. The second chapter looks at 'policed cities' as an indispensable aspect of urbanisation, culminating in the more recent 'zero tolerance' towards any form of unusual social behaviour. In Chapter 3, urban space is the ground for conflict between dominant frames excluding immigrants, and alternative movements open to the inclusion of immigrants in the urban environment.

The second part of the book focuses on Pisa. Chapter 4 investigates Pisa through the metaphor of the fox and the porcupine. According to social anthropologist Ulf Hannerz, the fox stands for diversity whereas the porcupine invests only in one direction. Pisa, once able to integrate different cultures as part of its identity and to facilitate inter-communication between them has chosen to be a 'porcupine' town by adopting measures that hide categories such as the homeless, immigrants and the marginalised with the intent of creating a peaceful and safe urban identity attractive to tourists. This is partly also motivated by the desire to curry favour with the Lega Nord, which has been gaining support in the province of Pisa since 2009.

Chapter 5 focuses on political strategies aimed at the Roma people. Pisa led the way in the early part of the decade with housing policies that encouraged the inclusion of the Roma people in the social fabric of Pisa. The European Union also gave the project particular consideration.