

local history. By organising archives and themed catalogues, schools and libraries, periodicals and publishing series, they confirmed that they could belong to two nationalities at the same time: ‘Greek by nationhood’ and ‘Italian by language and by choice’ (p. 267). This was also true for Andrea Mustoxidi, Vincenzo Monti’s Corfiot language assistant for the Italian translation of the *Iliad*, who was very active in the philhellenic movement. It was the same Mustoxidi who, after years of experience in the Russian diplomatic corps, would be called by Capodistria to take part in building that ‘Greek patria’ hitherto known and dear to him almost only through its literary projections.

These figures and environments were those first quashed by the phase following the birth of the independent Greek state (nevertheless under British tutelage). In reaction to the multiple identities borne by a large part of its potential ruling class, the new Greek state ended up on the road to an increasingly divisive nationalism whose aim was to erase the legitimacy of the various ‘paths to the nation’, which had led to the state’s birth and were also a major feature in the diaspora.

The case of Mustoxidi was emblematic. He ended up tarred by decidedly xenophobic brush owing to his championing of the war against the Italian language and Russophile and anti-Catholic nationalism, which fostered the already grave divide between those who felt ‘western’ and those who instead felt ‘eastern’. These dynamics have not been relegated to history but continue to be dramatically present, driving Konstantina Zanou – a Cypriot, and hence well aware of the problem – to remind us once more, at the end of the volume, of how much destructive and hurtful debris is strewn along the way to the affirmation of nationalist ideologies and nation-states.

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Note

1. See Isabella, M. and K. Zanou, eds. *Mediterranean Diasporas: Politics and Ideas in the Long 19th Century*. London-New Delhi-New York-Sydney: Bloomsbury, 2016.

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A Monastery for the Ibex: Conservation, State, and Conflict on the Gran Paradiso, 1919–1949

by Wilko Graf von Hardenberg, Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh Press, 2021, xii + 252 pp., \$50.00 (hardback), ISBN 9780822946359

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According to the Official List of Protected Natural Areas (*Elenco ufficiale delle aree protette*, EUAP), Italy is home to 25 national parks, one of which, in Sardinia, was institutionally

established in 1998 but is not yet operative. These parks constitute around 5.3 per cent of the national territory, ranging from the tiny Cinque Terre National Park (only 4,300 acres) to the largest of all, the Pollino National Park, which comprises slightly over 47 million acres. Yet none of them is more famous than the Gran Paradiso National Park, named for the eponymous mountain and established in 1922 to preserve and protect 173,000 acres of Alpine terrain between the regions of Val d'Aosta and Piedmont. Celebrating its hundredth anniversary this year, the Gran Paradiso National Park owes most of its fame to its most iconic animal inhabitant, the Alpine ibex (*Capra ibex*), whose profile is emblazoned on the park's logo and whose battle for survival prompted the park's very creation.

Wilko Graf von Hardenberg's volume, *A Monastery for the Ibex: Conservation, State, and Conflict on the Gran Paradiso, 1919–1949*, tracks the historical origins of the Gran Paradiso National Park and reconstructs how it was both instrumental in preventing the extinction of the Alpine ibex and the centre of a battle among different social, cultural, and political forces. The book follows a roughly chronological trajectory, leading readers from the motives behind the initial donation made by King Victor Emmanuel III of his royal hunting reserve to the Italian state in order to establish the first national park, to the turbulent years of the Resistance and the transition to the new Italian Republic after the Second World War. However, the book's focus lies mostly on the Fascist management of the park and how Fascism politicised the ibex and nature preservation for its own material and symbolic purposes. As pointed out in the introductory chapter ('A Paradise Reclaimed'), one of the main goals of this volume is to examine 'from a material angle, anchored to the day-to-day activities of the state and its agency, how the immanent idea fascism had of the state translated into environmental politics' (p. 11). In doing so, though, it also highlights both 'overlooked' historical continuities with pre- and post-Fascist Italy, and, perhaps even most importantly, the claim that conflict about access to the park's resources 'allowed, even in Fascist Italy, for spaces of social dialectics and the expression of interests that antagonized the policy decision of a wannabe totalitarian state' (pp. 10, 13).

A Monastery for the Ibex is composed of an introduction, followed by six chapters and a short epilogue. Each chapter, as well as the introductory and concluding remarks, has a title that plays ironically with the idea of 'paradise' embedded in the name of the national park: from 'The Devil's Paradise' of chapter one to 'Resistant Paradise', the epilogue, we learn how the park was not in fact a separate sphere (as etymologically suggested by the term 'paradise') but a place in which different local and national agents, as well as political, ecological, and scientific aspirations, engaged in conflicts that were both within and beyond the allegedly conservationist goal of the park. That goal, however, was ultimately and somehow surprisingly achieved: even though von Hardenberg states that the decision to preserve the ibex 'was driven by the desire of some members of urban and educated elites' against the will of the local population, since 'a veritable "monastery for the ibex" ... would have been impracticable in an area with such a significant human presence', he also acknowledges that 'all the present-day ibex herds in the Alps come from the stock originally preserved by the Italian royal house' (pp. 69, 32).

Graf von Hardenberg is an environmental historian who has published extensively on the environmental politics of Fascism, the notion of 'nature state', and the history of environmental conservation. It is thus unsurprising that *A Monastery for the Ibex* – the first volume in English that reconstructs in detail the history of an Italian national park – is extremely well-researched and accessible. It allows even non-specialists to retrace the Italian Fascist regime's stance on nature conservation as it shifted from initial lack of interest to enthusiastic appropriation, depicting itself as the saviour of Italy's

natural environment (p. 34). From there the regime adopted a colonial attitude toward these state-protected environments, whereby production of material and/or symbolic capital – and not the promotion of scientific research – was the central aim of conservation efforts (pp. 106–118). Yet, one of the most interesting aspects of this compelling work lies in its ability to display how the park has also been the stage for a clash between local and national stakeholders, a clash that did not end with the Fascist era but continues into the present-day Italian Republic (p. 158). Indeed, such conflicts surrounding environmental conservation efforts are bound to occur where local traditions and practices come up against global interests and influences. From this perspective, *A Monastery for the Ibex* is not only a convincing reconstruction of a specific portion of Italian environmental history but also a very much welcomed contribution, from an Italian perspective, to the contemporary larger debate on the entanglement of cultural, political, and ecological issues.

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Reimagining the Italian South: Migration, Translation and Subjectivity in Contemporary Italian Literature and Cinema

by Goffredo Polizzi, Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 2022, xiii + 207 pp., £90.00 (hardback), ISBN 978-1-80085685-1

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Drawing from a theoretical framework which connects postcolonial, transnational and translation theory with critical constructions of gender, sexuality, and race, and using an ample and well-selected bibliography, *Reimagining the Italian South* is divided into three main parts. They address, respectively, transnational theories and transnational histories of the South; representations of the Italian South in contemporary Italian literature; and new representations of the Italian South in contemporary Italian transnational cinema. In the first part, the author introduces complicated issues by way of a sophisticated summary of theories about North-South stereotypes, the southern question, the Mediterranean, the Global South, and emigration/immigration, with references to some of the most authoritative scholars in those fields, such as Franco Cassano, Iain Chambers, Jane Schneider, Caroline Levander and Walter Mignolo, Piero Bevilacqua, and Boaventura de Sousa Santos, to name a few.

To ‘demonstrate how the political questions posed by Santos in his “southern theory” can be pursued in the domain of literary and cinema studies’ (p. 20), in the second part of the volume, the author analyses in depth three contemporary novels: Giulio Angioni’s *Una ignota compagnia* (1992), Evelina Santangelo’s *Senzaterra* (2008), and Christiana de Caldas Brito’s *Colpo di mare* (2018). Polizzi’s selection is dictated by his desire to dissect the pivotal phenomenon of mobility, intertwined with cultural and linguistic hybridity, migration, integration and/or marginalisation, and ultimately with a better sense of self-understanding. He shows ‘how the current predicament of the Italian South as a