

# H-Net Reviews

in the Humanities & Social Sciences

Patrick Gallo. *For Love and Country: The Italian Resistance*. Lanham: University Press of America, 2003. viii + 361 pp. \$55.00 (paper), ISBN 978-0-7618-2496-1.

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While there exists today an extensive literature in English on Italian fascism, there is no corresponding body of work on the Italian anti-fascist Resistance. Other than Charles F. Delzell's monumental and groundbreaking work in 1961, *Mussolini's Enemies: The Italian Anti-Fascist Resistance*, there has not been a comprehensive work devoted to the subject. The Delzell book was reprinted in 1974 by Howard Fertig but is presently out of print. More narrowly focused, but an important work in its own right, was Frank Rosengarten's *The Italian Anti-Fascist Press* (1968; also out of print). Recently, David Ward published *Antifascisms: Cultural Politics in Italy, 1943-1946* but this is a work concentrating on the tension between Benedetto Croce's liberal anti-fascism and the more rigorous and demanding anti-fascism of the Action Party represented by Carlo Levi. Patrick Gallo's *For Love and Country* is therefore to be welcomed by students and specialists alike. The narrative is chronological and this perhaps is best for a topic that few readers in the United States are familiar with. Unfortunately, the writing is not always clear and the text is so marked by errors that one wonders if a copy editor's pen ever came near the manuscript or page proofs. There are mistakes throughout, including wrong dates, errors of fact, and misspellings of the names of crucial protagonists. This is to be regretted for Gallo has done an admirable job of synthesizing a vast and contentious body of scholarship and obviously has a deep admiration and respect for the anti-fascist Resistance, qualities that are today sometimes lacking in the scholarship.

The appropriate topics are covered, but an examination of the political ideologies behind each of the anti-fascist parties is missing. Gallo mentions the various parties and movements involved (from the monarchists on the right to the communists on the left), but the reader

has no idea what these parties represent. Gallo does mention the tension between Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Winston Churchill because of their conflicting view of the Italian partisans.

By including material on the Holocaust in Italy, Gallo implies that it cannot be separated from the Italian Resistance but he does not make this argument explicitly. The result is that this material, while important, sometimes seems out of place. What was the connection between anti-Semitic legislation and the anti-fascist Resistance? Many leaders in the left-wing parties were Jewish, such as Umberto Terracini, Emilio Sereni, Claudio Treves, Giuseppe Emanuele Modigliani (brother of the painter Amadeo), Carlo Levi, Primo Levi, Mario Levi, Leone Ginzburg, and Carlo and Nello Rosselli. What was the relationship (if any) between their Jewishness and anti-fascism?

This is a work of synthesis, not analysis, with little or no use of archival material. Nor is there any discussion or examination of the historiographical debates surrounding the Italian Resistance. Gallo does not offer a new interpretation of the Resistance nor does he offer a concise thesis. On the positive side, the author does offer new information on a critical episode in the Italian Resistance: the via Rasella attack and the subsequent Fosse Ardeatine massacre. He has reconstructed the events in a dramatic narrative. Gallo makes good use of interviews with some of the major protagonists of the Resistance. Another strong point of the book is also one of its critical flaws: Gallo concentrates on the Resistance in Rome and the surrounding Lazio region. But Rome was liberated in June 1944 (a day before D-Day) and so the work passes over nearly another year of armed resistance in the north of Italy. There should be more on the Spanish

Civil War which was crucial—intellectually, politically, and militarily—for the Armed Resistance of 1943-1945. Gallo concludes with material on the post-war trials of fascist and Nazi criminals, including that of SS Captain Erich Priebke in the 1990s.

The book will be of interest to a wide range of readers: those concerned with the Resistance and those curious about fascism and anti-fascism in Italy. Academics and scholars will not gain much from it but it may be adopted for course use if the publisher offers a corrected edition.

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