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and Carlo Sforza, as well as those of lesser-known figures connected to Adriatic politics, including Luigi Ziliotto, Attilio Hortis, and Vittorio Zupelli. However, in light of the vast documentation available, the section as a whole is somewhat disappointing. The author notes that the selection ‘does not aim for completeness’ (195) but, nonetheless, the choice seems scattershot, with excerpts ranging from technical discussions of the design of agreements to political debates and posturing in the Chamber of Deputies. In addition, the section covers only the period from April 1919 to December 1920 (bounded by discussions of the Paris Conference and Saint-Germain Treaty negotiations and approval of the Rapallo Treaty), considerably narrowing the window explored in the first section, which covers foreign policy from 1918 to 1926. Focus on the Treaty of Rapallo, while seemingly intended to illustrate the treaty’s importance in setting the tone for the rise of Fascist foreign policy, has the effect of minimising the importance of other issues highlighted in the essay, including the fate of Dalmatia, the continuing conflict over the autonomy of Fiume, and the Italian relationship with Albania, to name just a few examples.

The book is a scholar’s book. Its attention to the intricate details of negotiations over the Adriatic territories and synthesis of approaches to the Adriatic question offer considerable food for thought for researchers engaged in scholarship on the Adriatic provinces in the era of the First World War. It is also valuable for those interested in comparative history and the transnational diplomatic and political challenges and border conflicts that plagued inter-war Europe.

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For both Gramsci and Croce, the two figureheads of post-war Italian historiography, Italian emigration was out of sight, out of mind. Emigrants had removed themselves from the movement of Italian history. In this book of historical and cultural anthropology, Alessandra Brivio brings the human element of migration to the fore, as a centrepiece of the human experience. This cultural microhistory addresses imperialism, slavery, labour organisation, racism, Fascism, and inheritance at the level of individuals, families, and communities. Italiani in Ghana reads as a case history rich with human interest and meaning.

The British African colony of the Gold Coast, today Ghana, attracted a small immigration from two Italian towns: Roasio, Piedmont, in Vercelli province, close to Biella; and Fino del Monte, Lombardy, in Bergamo province, not far from Sondrio. Like many other towns in the Italian pre-Alps, both Roasio and Fino del Monte supported a high rate of seasonal and long-term emigration. Roasio sent significant numbers not only to France, Switzerland, Argentina, and North America, but also to South Africa, Angola, Mozambique, Rhodesia, Nigeria, and the Gold Coast. Following the classical model of chain migration, an early pioneer, Agostino D’Alberto from
Roasio and Bortolo Marinoni from Fino del Monte, successfully established themselves in the colony, then recruited friends, family, and neighbours to follow in his footsteps. The emigrants were nearly all male and working class, staying only several years in the colony before returning to Italy with their savings. Roasio provided building contractors and Fino del Monte supplied miners in the Gold Coast. The piemontesi and bergamaschi remained separate, due to their strong local connections and because miners were considered the lowest class of European workers.

Unlike the larger and more famous Italian settlements of the Americas, Europe, and in Italian Africa, the Italians in the Gold Coast remained small in number and completely at the mercy of the local British colonial government. Brivio studies the Italian community as a white but subaltern community in the British imperial society. Italian emigrants moved back and forth between the Gold Coast and nearby British Nigeria, remaining transients even as their small numbers of one or two hundred comprised a large percentage of the white European population in the colony.

The tenuous status of Italians in Ghana became brutally apparent by 1940. Fascist propaganda, organisation, and salutes energised the Italians abroad, but quickly proved utterly disastrous to the long-term fortunes and positions of Italians in Ghana. The culmination of the book is the internment of the Italian community during Fascist Italy’s war against its longtime friend and ally, Britain. Brivio includes a photocopy of the entire list of names and occupations, nearly all miners and contractors, of the 195 Italian men, two Italian women, and one German man interned and deported to Jamaica, on 10 September 1940. Brivio highlights how the internment not only liquidated the Italian community, which never recovered after the war, but also ruined the strict colour distinctions of solidarity and privilege between white and black subjects in Ghana.

With her focus on individuals in their context, Brivio begins her chronology with an appendix on Giambattista Scala, a Ligurian merchant who served as consul for the Kingdom of Sardinia in the Gold Coast from 1855 to 1859. Scala was active in replacing the slave trade with a network of legal commerce. He illustrates Brivio’s emphasis on the role of individual agency, rather than monolithic national institutions, or fixed categories of race and gender, in this history.

As the Italian migrants were male and the colour line in force, gender relations with African women were governed by ambiguous social norms. European society treated African prostitution or concubinage as an economic transaction, reserving the role of wives and mothers for European women. The payment of concubines, however, matched the dowry payment of traditional marriage. Italian men could thus locally marry Ashanti women and, in European terms, be married to only one wife in Europe. Far from being ostracised, their children in the Gold Coast remained part of Ashanti matrilineal society. Brivio emphasises how the legacy of these Italians proved enduring in West Africa and in their two home towns in Italy, even though this history of colonialism and migration did not influence Italy on a national level or shape the global context of millions of ‘Italians abroad’.

Brivio organises her anthropological study along local lines. She uses the National Archives of Ghana at Accra and Kumasi to great effect, as well as the British Colonial Office papers at the Public Record Office. From Italy she employs archival materials, diaries, memoirs, and many photographic illustrations from the Museum of the Emigrant in Roasio, as well as the local library in Fino del Monte. This is not a history of Italy per se, and Brivio does not adopt a national Italian lens or exploit Italian national archives. This choice makes sense, because the Italian community in Ghana was so small as to leave little archival trace in the Italian state, and many Italian consular and colonial archives were destroyed or scattered during the Second World War. Brivio includes excerpts from several of her interviews with the descendants of Italian marriages in Ghana, shining a light on how the family history of individuals endures much longer, and with more consequence, than the timelines of political or colonial history.

With this book, Charlotte Ross has done a great service to historians working on female same-sex desire in modern Italy and also to those working in the broader fields of queer, lesbian and gay studies. She has demonstrated that, contrary to commonly held assumptions, female same-sex desire was pervasive in the cultural discourses of the period. By exploring a wide variety of genres from medical texts to novels, from poems to erotic literature, from newspaper and review articles to diaries and letters, ranging from more prominent or mainstream publications to marginal and even clandestine ones, including translations from other languages, Ross brilliantly scrutinises the various ways in which female same-sex desire was represented in Italy between 1860s and 1930s. She warns that many of the literary artifacts she has studied are not examples of high literature, but this in no way detracts from the importance of these texts as cultural products which, indeed, under the author’s careful scrutiny reveal a great deal about cultural attitudes to sexuality in modern Italy.

The book is divided into three parts, covering three historical phases: 1860–1901, 1901–1919, and 1920–1939. The structure of each part is by and large similar: after an overview of the broad cultural context, Ross analyses the dominant medical ideas on female same-sex desire of the period and then how various literary productions recast or even at times challenged medical texts. By employing a perceptive and nuanced close reading, informed by queer and poststructuralist approaches, Ross shows how different cultural genres merged, borrowed vocabulary and opened up new possibilities for speaking about subjects quite often considered to be taboo. The author identifies a number of different broad trends spanning the 70 years under review. Fin-de-siècle Italy witnessed a pathologisation of same-sex desires; in the first two decades of the twentieth century sexological ideas reached a broader audience, yet increasingly we find that Italian writers, including some women, were emboldened to write and publish confessional erotic texts. An example of this genre is Nada Peretti’s L’eredità di Saffo (1908). Finally, in the 1930s, literary representations of female same-sex desire moved towards a ‘gendered psychological narrative‘ with works such as Natalia (1930) by Fausta Cialente, Disordine (1932) and Barbara (1934) by Marisa Ferro, and Nessuno Torna Indietro (1938) by Alba de Céspedes.

Ross’s choice to start by analysing medical sources, most of them already familiar to historians working on the history of same-sex desires, is not casual: sexology has provided a vocabulary with which to talk about sexuality that is still currently in use; a term such as homosexuality does after all have a medical origin and the modern way of thinking about sexuality has indeed been shaped...