Translation Rights / Fall 2019

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“Excellent, atmospheric... A charming, perceptive tragicomedy.”

The Guardian

La mennulara / The Almond Picker


Like many memorable works of fiction, La Mennulara hinges on a question, in this case: who is Maria Rosalia Inzerillo, known as Mennulara, the almond picker? Born into a desperately poor Sicilian farming family, Mennulara went into service when she was only a girl, as a maid for a well-to-do local family; by dint of hard work and intelligence, she became the indispensable administrator of the family’s affairs and was said to be rich. Still, she was a mere servant, and now (as the story begins) she is dead. Who was she, really? Everyone has a very different idea about Mennulara’s amazing life. Was she a humble servant who ruled her master, or perhaps a pawn for the Mafia? Was she a seducer and opportunist, a sly blackmailer waiting for a payoff, or the opposite? Was La Mennulara a saint or a devil? During the thirty days following her death, the surprising truth is revealed.
Una donna / A Woman

A Woman, which describes Aleramo’s decision to leave her husband and son and move to Rome, is a key text for understanding Italian women’s writing of the twentieth century. It is a Bildungsroman whose endpoint is a new, emancipated female identity. This journey to emancipation has aspects of the heroic to it, but Aleramo is careful to underscore the compromises, risks and losses (most poignantly, of her son) along the way. This genre of the journey to emancipation through loss and guilt recurs in politicised works published much later in and around the feminist movements and key debates over divorce and abortion legislation (e.g. Orianna Fallaci’s Letter To An Unborn Baby).

A Woman also touches on several crucial symbolic aspects of the subordination of women under patriarchy – the silencing of women; sexuality, rape and the law; mother-daughter relationship, women’s insanity (here of the protagonist’s mother) – which all feature prominently in later and contemporary works, both literary and political.

SIBILLA ALERAMO
(14 August 1876 - 13 January 1960) was an Italian author and feminist best known for her autobiographical depictions of life as a woman in late 19th century Italy. Active in political and artistic circles, she wrote extensively on feminism and homosexual understanding; she was also a diarist and close to many literary intellectuals of the early part of the 20th century.

PUBLISHERS:
Spanish (Spain only): Altamarea
UK: Penguin Allen Lane
Dancing Paradiso / Dancing Paradiso

Dancing Paradiso is a nightclub in a rough, tough metropolis where “you don’t need to be a good guy to get in / they’ll also take schmucks / and sometimes they’ll change them.” It is in this club that a guardian angel – “Angelo Angelica” – tries to bring together the five main players in this narrative in verse: Stan, the sad pianist who is preparing his last concert for Bill (a drummer friend who is dying in a hospital); Amina, a young refugee who has lost her mother crossing the border; Elvis, a grotesquely obese hacker who hasn’t seen the light of day for years, maybe a compulsive liar or maybe a hitman; and Lady, a poet, sophisticated and inebriated, obsessed with suicide. Five “creatures of the night / with nowhere in the world to go, /werewolves with no moon,” whose stories we discover little by little and as an evening at Dancing Paradiso approaches. Each performs a moving tragicomic solo. Restricted by their solitude, each of them seems to have lost hope. But a ragamuffin angel, fallen from the sky and wings muddied, himself a bit of a loose unit, will keep an eye out for these five wandering characters, giving them a chance to join voices and create a polyphonic tale that also offers them a possible path to salvation.

STEFANO BENNI

was born in Bologna in 1947. He is a journalist, writer, and poet who has written for the theater and staged and performed in numerous shows with various jazz and classical musicians. For years he has hosted seminars on reading and the imagination. He is the author of many successful novels and story collections translated and published in thirty countries around the world.

Bar Sport (1976)
Prima o poi l’amore arriva (1981)
Terra’ (1983)
I meravigliosi animali di Stranalandia (1984)
Comici spaventati guerrieri (1986)
Il bar sotto il mare (1987)
Baol (1990)
Ballate (1991)
La compagnia dei Celestini (1992)
L’ultima lacrima (1994)
Elianto (1996)
Bar Sport Due mila (1997)
Blues in sedici (1998)

Teatro (1999)
Spiriti (2000)
Dottor Niu (2001)
Saltatempo (2001)
Achille pie’ veloce (2003)
Margherita Dolcevita (2005)
La grammatica di Dio (2007)
PZone e tempesta (2009)
Le Beatrici (2011)
Di tutte le ricchezze (2012)
Pantera (2014)
Cari mostri (2016)
Prendiluna (2017)

PUBLISHERS:
China: Ecus
France: Actes Sud
Galizia: Rinoceronte
Germany: Wagenbach
Hungary: Scolar
Japan: Kawade
Spain: Blackie Books
Turkey: Cumartesi
US: Europa Editions
Serbia: Nova Knija
Russia: Vostochnaya
Romania: Nemira
Shobo

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Due sirene in un bicchiere / 
Two Mermaids In a Glass

You don’t stumble upon the sleepy Mermaids B & B by chance – four rooms on a Mediterranean island hidden behind a turquoise door, a kitchen where there is always something going on and a large terrace overlooking the sea. It is not in any tourist guide and you can’t book it online or through a travel agency: you have to write a letter justifying your request, and then wait for a light blue envelope with the symbol of a siren on it to arrive confirming your stay. Eva, Jonas, Olivia, Lisa and Lara are well aware of this, the five new guests who arrive on the island for a detox holiday that promises to restore body and soul, and help them find the answers they are looking for. To welcome them there are Dana, a thirty year-old who wants to improve everyone’s life with a little bit of yoga, meditation and her famous cleansing organic fruit shakes, and Tamara, a middle-aged painter who loves the sea, and the silence and solitude of her studio. Together they manage the B & B offering sessions of yogatherapy, art, cooking, talk and lots of relaxation, away from cell phones and technology. But what happens when the past pops up to unhinge the present? From what and from whom is Tamara hiding, to such an extent that she never leaves the island? And who are Eva, Jonas, Olivia, Lisa and Lara? Are they really who they claim to be or are they lying, above all to themselves? Between sunny days and one dramatic night that keeps everyone in suspense, the guests at the B & B turn their vacation into a necessary truce in which they rediscover who they are and who they want to be, as “what happens is the only thing that could have happened” and “something always happens at the right moment.”

FEDERICA BRUNINI

is a writer, journalist, photographer, and tireless traveler who has written for Il Corriere della Sera, Glamour, l’Espresso, and Grazia. Her publications include: Il manuale della viaggiatrice (Morellini, 2008), Sarò regina. La vita di Kate Middleton come me l’ha raccontata lei (Sonzogno, 2011), Travel Therapy: il viaggio giusto al momento giusto (Morellini, 2011), and La matematica delle bionde (Giunti, 2013). Brunini lives on the island of Gozo, in Malta, where in 2014 she participated in the shooting of the film By the Sea, starring and directed by Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt.
“In his new book Catozzella tells a story of adults and children, of poverty and dreams of redemption.”

la Repubblica

E tu splendi / And You Shine

Arigliana, “fifty stone houses and 200 inhabitants,” is a tiny village in the Lucanian mountains in the southern region of Basilicata, where Pietro and Nina spend their holidays with their grandparents. In this sparse summertime landscape the places and playgrounds that fire the children’s imaginations are a stream which is no longer a stream, an old Norman tower and a large derelict building that would have been a beautiful house many years ago. Everyday life continues to play out apparently unchanged in all the usual places: the main square, the grandparents’ house and shop. They are surrounded by a community whose destiny has been radically changed for the worse by an unscrupulous landowner known as zi’ Rocco, Uncle Rocco, whose activity has plunged the village into poverty and backwardness. That summer – which for Pietro and Nina is very different from all that came before, in that it is the first they spend without their late mother – is marked by the discovery which will divide the village: a family of foreign people is hiding in the tower. Who are they? What they want? Why don’t they just go back to where they have come from? It’s this abrupt arrival of the “other” that triggers rejection. Having catalyzed the anger and fear of the village, however, it is in fact the newcomers who are the agents of change, who are able to bring back some hope to this tough Southern community where dreams and tensions are all mixed up together. It is an unforgettable summer, that for Pietro becomes a rite of passage, both painful and full of tenderness and joy: his is the narrative voice which shows how death, betrayal and injustice can be overcome, and how you grow up by mastering your own fragile and stubborn splendor. Through this irreverent voice, easygoing but wise, Catozzella writes a powerful and ultimately feel-good novel, full of light and shadows, funny and tragic – simple and unadorned, as often the deepest and most important stories are.

GIUSEPPE CATOZZELLA

is author of reportage and novels, among which the international bestseller Non dirmi che hai paura, winner of the Premio Strega Giovani in 2014 and translated all over the world (the novel is being developed into film), and more recently Il grande futuro, both of them published by Feltrinelli.

PUBLISHERS OF
NON DIRMI CHE HAI PAURA:
Albania: Botimet Dudaj
Arab Countries: Almutawassit
Azerbaijan: Teas Press
Brazil: Record
Catalonia: Sembra
Croatia: Hrvatsko filoško društvo
Czech Republic: Barrister & Principal
Finland: LIKE
France: Seuil
Germany: Knaus - Bertelsmann
Greece: Kritiki
Israel: Yedioth
Netherlands: De Geus
Norway: Pax
Poland: Sonia Draga
Serbia: Laguna
Slovenia: Mladinska Knjiga
Spain: Grijalbo - PRH
Taiwan: Rye Field
Turkey: Epsilon
UK: Faber
US: Penguin Press

PUBLISHERS OF
E TU SPLEN DI:
Netherlands: De Geus
Arab Countries: Almutawassit
Nonna Oracolo / Grandmother Oracle

Teresa has always kept a secret of which she is now the sole custodian. She is an old, stubborn woman and, when she senses that her mind and memory are becoming unstable, she decides not to jeopardize what she has been keeping hidden for a lifetime. So, one night, she lays down in her bed and doesn’t get up anymore: for ten years “silent and still, she stared at what others called emptiness that she had learned to interpret.”

Her family, however, determined not to give up on her, brings her bed to the centre of the living room – which is the centre of the exuberant life of the house, an all-female house. Besides Teresa, there are her daughters, Irene and Flora, her cousin Rusì, the Peruvian caregiver Pilar and the granddaughter, Nina, who tells their story. They are not ready to lose Teresa and she feels it, so, before leaving, she gives them three oracles. One is written on her skin (as tradition says has happened to Epimenides), one is made of fog and poetry (as happened in the presence of the Pythia of Delphi), one becomes a lighting (according to the tradition of the Erythraean Sybil).

These are oracles that untangle the knot that is blocking their lives. And, by freeing their lives, Teresa finally frees herself.

“This is a story of invisible things, of prophecies and homemade oracles, of freedom and chance, of the difficulty of deciding, choosing, loving, growing up and dying. It is a family story, a story of silence and signs and the difficulty of interpreting them.”

Only an anthropologist like Arianna Cecconi, who studies nocturnal dreams and ritual practices, would have been able to tell this story, with her writing and her imagery which are at the same time realistic and magical, and which dig at the bottom of our secrets, touching ancient chords to make them vibrate and to give us back a music that reveals and restores.
“Celati seeks to tell it like it is, without baroque flourish or rococo artifice. What he has not seen or met is beyond the horizon and absent from his canvas.”

_The Spectator_

“Gianni Celati: unusual, plural, multifaceted, nonconformist.”

_La Stampa_

**Narratori delle pianure / Storytellers of the Plains**

One of the most important short story collections in Italian literature floats between a dream world and everyday life. In 1984, Italo Calvino announced the publication of _Storytellers of the Plains_: “After years of silence, Celati returns now with a book whose centre is the visible world and an ever more interior acceptance of the daily landscape in what would seem least likely to stimulate the imagination.” Thirty short stories set in the valley of the Po River that are funny and fantastic, sad and terrible.

In what amounts to a cantata, the narrators evaporate, leaving behind brief tales that establish the tellers’ existences by recording their inability to overcome alienation and despair. Celati adopts a deceptively simple style in both his language and structure to weave angst into the stuff of myth: his generous, panoramic vision imparts a fable-like quality to what might otherwise have been merely a string of absurd sketches. Across these pages flit children oppressed by ennui; a scholar who rewrites classic works in order to supply each with a happy ending; a multigenerational trio that uses encephalograms to pinpoint just what “makes the world go on;” a barber who looks for tangible proof of his existence. Many of the disembodied “storytellers” here have been undone by the inadequacies of language, a theme that Celati develops imaginatively and integrates with delicacy. By travelling and gathering stories on the banks of the Po River, Celati rediscovers the oral narrator that was so important to Walter Benjamin: his stories celebrate this vanishing species, while pointing up the environmental decay that not only affects landscapes, but also the craft of telling tales and exchanging experiences.

**GIANNI CELATI**

_was born in Sondrio in 1937. Emeritus Professor of Anglo-American literature at the University of Bologna, he is the translator of Celine, Melville, Stendhal, Swift, Twain, London, Barthes, Holderlin, and others. Discovered as a novelist by Italo Calvino, he made his debut in 1970 with Comiche. Storytellers of the Plains won the Premio Cinque Scole and the Premio Grinzane Cavour._

_Publishers:_

China - Simplified characters: Citic Press
Spain: Anagrama
Razmataz / Razmataz

‘Conceived as a story, Razmataz celebrates the moment when old Europe encounters young black music – in Paris, the city best suited to broker and host such a meeting.’ Monsieur Rideau, a theatre director, falls asleep while waiting for a company of Afro-American musicians and dancers. Meanwhile one of the dancers disappears. A police detective sets out to find her in a world populated by characters who are to some degree emblematic of Europe in the 1920s: the wealthy bourgeoisie, an expressionist artist from Berlin, an Italian playboy, a top Parisian fashion designer, an English sportsman and a writer of mystery novels.

Razmataz weaves different moods and suspends them in a dreamlike web that recalls both music and film. This new edition of Paolo Conte’s sweeping musical work, performed and recorded for the first time in 2000, contains the first script – effectively the Razmataz story – together with extraordinary original material: the text with handwritten notes, sketches, and the score annotated by hand. It also includes a conversation between Paolo Conte and Manuela Furnari on the obsessive pull of music and art. A book that is destined to become a cult.
La bomba / The Bomb

Forty-five years after the Piazza Fontana bomb in Milan, two militant anarchists discovered that everyone had lied in the police station that night. And the terrible secret is that they were all pawns in a far-reaching game being played out by the secret services: the famous, shadowy Bureau of Confidential Affairs. This is a journey back in time, with the pace of a thriller, whose scope includes the bank that was the bomb's target (which no longer exists, though its name remains on the building), two conflicting memorials to Giuseppe Pinelli, the palace of justice where the anarchists responsible for the Teatro Diana bombing had been tried, and the improbable taxi journey of barely a hundred metres apparently taken by Pietro Valpreda, another suspect.

Fifty years on there are still unanswered questions. Why, for example, was the National Bank of Agriculture targeted? The bleakest year of Italy's history remains full of unresolved mysteries. Amid the carnage of bombs and false trails, we learn the true story of Rolandi, the taxi driver who incriminated Valpreda; we are introduced to the Catholic University's teaching staff, who first began to have doubts about Pinelli's suicide; and we meet Guido Lorenzon, a French teacher from a village in the Veneto who got to the bottom of the case and informed the justice system.
Nella notte / Into the Night

Nora is a brilliant young woman, passionate about the study of politics and current affairs. Her doctoral thesis, Nella notte, is a study of the hours during which Onofrio Pegolani’s election to President of the Republic – a nailed-down certainty according to pollsters, analysts and a majority of parliamentarians – faded to nothing, for no apparent reason. The quality of her thesis leads Nora’s supervisor, Professor Atzeni, to offer her a prestigious post in a research centre in Rome: the job entails collecting and archiving classified information so that it may then be sold to the highest bidder, feeding an underworld riven with extortion and power play. Nora would be ready to refuse the job offered to her but at the centre, for the first time since they were best friends in high school, she meets Alice: extremely beautiful, at times a touch cynical, but with very good people skills. The connection between them seems to be intact despite the years that have passed. At work, Nora stumbles on a dossier which contains an unpublished chapter from her thesis that had been removed at her professor’s suggestion. The chapter focused on a crime that was discovered the same night Pergolani’s career in the Partito dei Giusti came crashing down, a crime in which he was supposed to have played an important part. What was this chapter doing in the archive? Nora has no choice but to try to find out. A double investigation: on her case, and on the true nature of power relations.

Moving between the political and the personal, Concita De Gregorio offers to the reader an authentic anatomy of power, analyzing with ruthless lucidity and passion old and new customs: from endemic corruption to the systematic manipulation of information, to the distortion ‘truth’ that is fed by new media. The boundary between truth and lies is hidden in a game of mirrors. This is a story that draws on the author’s thirty years of direct contact with a world that is more shadowy that one might like to think.

CONCITA DE GREGORIO

is a graduate of the University of Pisa. She began working as a journalist for local newspapers and then received a scholarship to join La Repubblica, where she was a politics and culture correspondent for twenty years. She returned to La Repubblica as a columnist after overseeing L’Unita from 2008 to 2011. She hosts the RaiTre television program Pane quotidiano (Daily Bread) and is co-founder of the Spanish magazine Ctxt. She has four children.
Arturo, a 35 year old realtor, is still single. His life goal is to maintain the status quo, nothing shall be ever changed. He has a few hobbies which he shares with his friends; food is his only passion, the most important one. Arturo is so picky and demanding when it comes to food that friends roll their eyes when he is deciding what to eat in a restaurant.

All is well in Arturo’s life till THE GIRL enters the scene: she is the daughter of a pastry chef in Palermo, whose pastry shop sells the most exquisite Iris – the soft, crunchy, delicious spongy dessert Arturo that loves most. And thus she is the woman of Arturo’s dreams.

She is smart, resourceful, but a religious, practising Catholic; she is as fussy in religious matters as Arturo is particular about food. Arturo decides to win her over using religion, he will play Jesus in the Via Crucis procession, even though he has forgotten everything about Catholicism...

*Che Dio perdona* is a hilarious, witty comedy that entertains while also commenting on an important aspect of contemporary society.
Deviation / Deviazione

Lucia is a young woman of middle-class origins—the daughter of the Undersecretary of the Republic of Salò—who has lived in France and been much influenced, even from a distance, by the myths of Fascism with which she has grown up. Not only that, she now believes that among the lies circulating about Nazi-Fascism there is also that of the cruelty of the labor camps. She decides to see for herself what is happening, and goes, as a volunteer, to the camps, certain that her journey will enable her to refute the “slander” against the treatment of those who “work” on behalf of Hitler’s great Reich. Thus begins Lucia’s descent into hell, a violent and complex experience of a horror that consumes her existence and even becomes a sort of norm. Through Lucia’s eyes, D’Eramo traces a formative path not unlike her own—an adventure of consciousness, testimony, and ultimately a cry of alarm.

First published in Italy in 1979, Deviation is a seminal work in Holocaust literature—a story that confronts evil head-on, and that with its highly disciplined structure and language explores a fate still incomplete, still vulnerable to the violent liberation of any sudden “deviation.”

LUCIA D’ERAMO
was born in 1925 in Reims to Italian parents and died in Rome on March 6, 2001. Her books include Nucleo Zero (1981), Partiranno (1986), Ultima Luna (1993), Una strana fortuna (1997) and L’opera di Ignazio Silone (1971). In 1999 she published Io sono un’aliena (“I am an alien”), a conversation in which she retraces the steps of her existential and intellectual path.

PUBLISHERS:
France: Le Tripode
Germany: Klett-Cotta
Greek: Kladarithmos
Spain: Seix Barral
UK: Pushkin Press
US: Farrar, Straus & Giroux
Tourism is the most important industry of this new century, because it moves people and capital, imposes infrastructure, upsets and redesigns the architecture and topography of cities. With the lucidity of his singular sociological perspective, Marco D’Eramo outlines the features of an era in which the distinction between travelers and tourists no longer makes sense; he also explores the origins of this global phenomenon and observes its evolution to the present day. He describes the birth of the era of tourism by evoking the first great globetrotters—from Francis Bacon to Samuel Johnson to Gobineau and Mark Twain—who practiced a concept of travel that in their own eras remained elitist, yet encompassed the pursuit of the Other, of the wild and authentic experiences typical of any touristic adventure.

It is precisely to this spasmodic need for authenticity that the urban landscape in which we live today has adapted. And yet, this statement comes with an important qualification: the authenticity that belongs to the logic of tourism is a false one, one that aims to satisfy tourists’ expectations rather than offering a real snapshot—a snapshot not always pleasant or easy to interpret—of a place. This is the case to the extent that entirely touristic cities have been created, such as Las Vegas or the analogous Chinese example of Lijiang, where the Eiffel Tower can be exported and reproduced alongside the Grand Canal.

If tourism is an industry, tourists are its market and touristic cities compete for a slice of the pie. Following an urban itinerary that extends all over the globe, D’Eramo reveals the dialectic of the tourism phenomenon and examines it without snobbish prejudices, but rather by situating it in the spirit of his time.
Vittoria / Vittoria

Vittoria, a photographer from Genoa who has worked on some successful advertisements, has always managed to navigate the rough waters of life thanks to a good mix of common sense and irony. She thought she had even found love but, after Federico leaves her, the world crumbles upon her. Vittoria begins to feel confused, lost, and gets through a deep creative crisis: she is forty-six years old, has no partner, no job and doesn't know with which money she is going to buy dry food for Sugo (“Sauce”), her beloved cat. Until unsolicited advice gives her an idea…
This is a book on friendship, on the ability to think out of the box. It is an invitation to dare. Vittoria is a women's fiction book with characters that you will love.
Qualcosa di vero / An Element of Truth

Coming home drunk in the dead of night, there’s every chance you might trip over something: a step, your shoelaces, a rug that’s out of place. But if you happen to be called Giulia, if you have a good job in advertising and children represent no more to you than a niche market, you might also bump into a little girl in a nightdress: Rebecca, your new neighbour’s daughter. Then, despite the alcohol fumes, you might even invite her to spend the night on your sofa. It’s just that you then find yourself telling her fairy tales every time her mother is mysteriously away from home. Anything from Cinderella to Tom Thumb, from Rapunzel to the Little Mermaid, so long as they are the original versions by Perrault, the Brothers Grimm and Hans Christian Andersen, in which frogs only turn into princes if you throw them against a wall, and it’s certainly not a kiss that wakes the most beautiful girl in the kingdom.

And if your name is Rebecca and you’ve only recently arrived in the city, you can try to win over your classmates with these ‘real fairy stories’. Except you then come up against the fearsome girls led by Gilda with the hairband, ready to taunt you with sugar-coated Disney versions. And perhaps, even though you’re only nine years old, you’ll try to convince Giulia, the friend you met on the landing of the apartment building, that even if Prince Charming doesn’t really exist, the right man is sometimes closer than you think.
Le entità oscure / Dark Matters

Something was always amiss in astrophysicist Fritz Zwicky’s calculations when he was studying how galaxies moved in the 1930s. Light, speed, the ratio between mass and light, the total light output of all the cluster’s galaxies was wrong; the numbers did not add up. Light that was expected to be present in galactic clusters and in stars was not in fact present; darkness was there. Thus began the search for dark matter, an unsolved mystery that triggered fierce competition between physicists, astronomers, cosmologists as well as philosophers. Some believe dark matter exists, others dismiss the theory as it defies Einstein’s theory of special relativity.

Cristiano Galbiati, leading physicist and ‘Dark matter believer,’ tells the story of this quest, explains what dark matter is, why it exists, how that is proven and why it is so important to us. Dark matter is the Holy Grail of contemporary science, and Le entità oscure is a lyrical, mesmerizing, fascinating essay.

CRISTIANO GALBIATI
is Full Professor of Physics at Princeton University and Full Professor of Particle Astrophysics at Gran Sasso Science Institute, where he coordinates the Dark Side experiment. He is the author of several scientific publications.
In 2007 Umberto Galimberti published an extremely successful book on nihilism and young people, *L’ospite inquietante*, in which he described the high rate of unhappiness and dissatisfaction among young people today; this in his opinion was due to not so much to some sort of psychological existential crisis that is typically used to characterize adolescence and youth, but instead to a crisis that he defined as “cultural,” because at that time the future that culture seemed to afford young people was not something promised and reliable, but instead something that was unpredictable, something that seemed to have little points of intersection with a young person’s life and which could help underpin a committed existence.

So what has changed in the interim years from those “nihilistic” days? Not a huge amount, except that a not inconsiderable percentage of youngsters can be said to have graduated from the “passive nihilism” of resignation to the “active nihilism” of those who neither underestimate the difficulty of these times nor manage to rid themselves of it, but who nevertheless are not resigned to it. And so after this brusque reality check, they seek to push themselves forwards all modes and directions, in a very determined attempt not to allow their dreams to be extinguished.

*Giving Young People the Voice They Deserve* gathers the voices of these young people, who have a great need to be heard, to be able to say the things that they haven’t been able to say to parents and teachers, because they fear they already know the answers, answers which in turn feel too far removed from these young people’s concerns, anxieties and problems. So they rely on a distant listener, Galimberti, who starts a dialogue with them, not to solve their problems, but to offer another point of view that makes these problems appear less dramatic and insoluble.
L’età dei muri / The Age of Walls

More than forty barriers and walls separate people and countries all over the world. Most of them were built after 1989, actually when the Berlin Wall collapsed and everyone thought that a new era would begin.

As in the past, today the world seems ablaze once again; we do not know what will happen, what will be the outcome of the new business, of this new credo, the credo of exclusion.

From Warsaw to Berlin, across the Caribbean Sea, passing Normandy shores, Palestine and Korea, travelling across Iraq, Zimbabwe, Brazil, to Mexico and USA, ending in European Fortress, Carlo Greppi tells us the story of four men, four witnesses whose lives merge and entwine and whose messages from the past resound in our era: the Age of Walls.

CARLO GREPPI
Turin 1982, has a Phd in History, is an author, television presenter and a reporter for RAI. He is member of the scientific committee at “Giorgio Agosti,” the Piedmont Institute for the history of the Resistance and of contemporary History. He is the founder of the Deina Association that works with students, promoting cultural activities about 20th century history. He has published L’Ultimo Treno. Racconti del viaggio verso il lager (Donzelli, 2012) that won the Ettore Gallo Prize, granted to debut historians. He has translated and edited Non c’è una fine. Trasmettere la memoria di Auschwitz (Bollati Boringhieri, 2017) by Piotr M.A. Cywiński, director of the Memorial and of the Museum at Auschwitz.

La nostra Shoah. Italiani, sterminio, memoria (e-book, 2015)
Non restare indietro (2016, novel for children)
Uomini in grigio. Storie di gente comune nell’Italia della guerra civile (2016)
Bruciare la Frontiera (2018)
“To many readers Il gattopardo is the greatest Italian novel of the twentieth century, perhaps the greatest ever, and uniquely relevant to modern Italy.”
   
   The Economist

“An amazing meditation on time. The most perfect novelized account not just of something that happened a long time ago, but also of what time does to us, when you feel it travelling through our lives. Very moving.”
   
   Simon Schama

Il gattopardo / The Leopard

“For over twenty-five centuries we’ve been bearing the weight of superb and heterogeneous civilizations, all from outside, none made by ourselves, none that we could call our own. This violence of landscape, this cruelty of climate, this continual tension in everything, and even these monuments of the past, magnificent yet incomprehensible because not built by us and yet standing round us like lovely mute ghosts; all those rulers who landed by main force from every direction who were at once obeyed, soon detested, and always misunderstood, their only expressions works of art we couldn’t understand and taxes which we understood only too well and which they spent elsewhere: all these things have formed our character, which is thus conditioned by events outside our control as well as by a terrifying insularity of mind.”

Elegiac, bittersweet and profoundly moving, Il gattopardo chronicles the turbulent transformation of the Risorgimento, the period of Italian Unification. The waning feudal authority of the elegant and stately Prince of Salina is pitted against the materialistic cunning of Don Calogero, in Lampedusa’s magnificent memorial to a dying age.

“Sicily 1860: Prince Fabrizio has always lived contentedly with the ‘lovely mute ghosts’ of the past. But now, with the impending unification with Italy and his nephew’s undesirable marriage, he fears ruin. This is a beautiful meditation on change, with Sicily and its golden landscape in the starring role. Brilliant.”

The Observer

“One of the great lonely books.”

E. M. Forster

Racconti (1961)
Le ultime lezioni / Last Lessons

Professor Costantini is the type of person everyone has in mind when thinking of a teacher. Jacopo remembers his literature lessons at high school – “when he was speaking about love, death, women, heroes, we used to hear something else, we used to hear him talking about us” – but deep down he has for Costantini the same combination of mistrust and curiosity that he feels for all his teachers. Then Costantini’s wife suddenly dies and he retires from teaching, withdrawing with his disabled daughter to Sant’Erasmo, an agricultural island in Venice’s lagoon.

Jacopo will meet him again a few years later, at a delicate moment of his life: he has broken up with Alice, with whom, though he refuses to admit it, he is still in love; he is also about to finish his economics studies without the slightest clue what he’s going to do next with his life. Sant’Erasmo welcomes him with its canals and long periods of silence, artichokes and bicycles, and a warm salty breeze: “Venice was some way away, the Adriatic too. There were swallows and seagulls. There was the perfume of trees, and the warmth and the saltiness in the air. It seemed to be far from home, in the tropics, in some nonexistent wild world.”

Jacopo needs that refuge, and needs Costantini and his words, he needs his errors corrected, to be investigated in order to understand himself. And then there’s Lucia, his old teacher’s daughter, who hides femininity and life. So Jacopo, for an entire summer, visits often that house and, under the shadow of a big mimosa, writes the thesis that he hadn’t even been able to begin. From there he will find his destiny.

Giovanni Montanaro’s novel looks at a difficult age when we learn our last lessons, when we become adults thanks also to those unpredictable encounters with teachers that life occasionally gives us.
Elogio del petrolio / In praise of oil

No one can say what energy is. All we know is that without its transformational power, nothing can be produced. Physicists see energy’s role as a cellular force, anthropologists see it as a cultural force. A history of the world and of humanity might present food as the first source of energy, but when food was produced by agriculture instead of hunting, the world changed. Then the fossil became our source of energy and our lives changed again, as we grew and multiplied. And now, perhaps, we face a transition away from fossil fuels, or global warming will become uncontrollable, with catastrophic consequences. This time too, if there’s a revolution, our lives will never be the same again.

Massimo Nicolazzi has managed major energy projects in Europe and Asia. In the last two centuries history has accelerated thanks to increasingly economical and efficient energy sources: coal, petroleum and later natural gas. Without these, the societal and technological progress that we have experienced would not have been possible. But today they are unsustainable. Dispensing with them will be difficult, because there are so many different interests at play. For example, in Italy, does the taxation of fossil fuels yield greater benefits than the damage caused by exhaust emissions? This account investigates the complex web of power relationships that make a solution to the obsolescence of fossil fuels so difficult to find. Only one thing is certain: ‘the availability of energy is the key to everything’.
“Doctor Zhivago belongs to that small group of novels by which all others are ultimately judged.”
Frank Kermode, Spectator

“A single act of defiance and genius.”
Isaiah Berlin, Sunday Times

Il Dottor Živago / Doctor Zhivago

One of the greatest love stories ever told, banned in the Soviet Union until 1988, Doctor Zhivago is the epic story of the life and loves of a poet-physician during the turmoil of the Russian Revolution. Taking his family from Moscow to what he hopes will be shelter in the Ural Mountains, Yuri Zhivago finds himself instead embroiled in the battle between the Whites and the Reds, and in love with the tender and beautiful nurse Lara.

“The best way to understand Pasternak’s achievement in Doctor Zhivago is to see it in terms of this great Russian literary tradition, as a fairy tale, not so much of good and evil as of opposing forces and needs in human destiny and history that can never be reconciled... Zhivago is a figure who embodies the principle of life itself, the principle that contradicts every abstraction of revolutionary politics.”
John Bayley

“From his schooldays, Pasternak tells us, Yury Zhivago had dreamed of writing ‘a book of impressions of life in which he would conceal, like sticks of dynamite, the most striking things he had seen so far.’ Doctor Zhivago was that book. It was packed with dynamite and, as Pasternak expected, it blew up in his face.”
Ann Pasternak Slater
Mantieni il bacio /
Keep on Embracing

Who said that empathy is necessary to establish good relations? That love is first of all a dialogue?

And what if “dialogue” and “empathy” were just buzzwords used to ward off the otherness of the Other, to mitigate its radical and irreducible difference, its foreign being? What if love were conditioned not by dialogue but rather by the encounter with an indecipherable secret, with a mystery that resists any effort at empathy?

Lacan claimed that there is no such thing as a sexual relationship, that relations between the sexes is always a failure. I can never feel what the other feels, can never coincide with or be him/her. But it is from the experience of this failure that love becomes possible as love for the hetero. It is a question of trying to share the impossibility of sharing. If I love you it is not because I enter into a dialogue with you but because in you there is something of me and you that escapes me, that is impossible for me to reach. I discover, that is, in you a secret that overcomes me and distances itself from every possible empathy.

In an intimate and deep study, Massimo Recalcati investigates the miracle of love, the most mysterious sentiment of all. “Fidelity is not a prison or a cage,” he explains, “If it turns into a sacrifice we must free ourselves. Fidelity becomes a posture of love because it transforms and renews love, there is no need to go elsewhere to find it. Like when we watch dawn breaking: we have seen it many times before but our admiration would never tire of it, each time it appears different, new.”
Le cose che bruciano / Things That Burn

Attilio Campi is a bloke in his fifties who has retired to live in the country. He would describe himself thus: “They say that I am the author of my own downfall.” But it should be noted that he has left behind a brilliant career in politics which was unfortunately destroyed while he was at the peak of his powers by his frankly wacky proposal to reintroduce school uniform in schools throughout the country.

Rejected by his own party, Campi is furious and disappears from public life to the solitude of the Roccapane countryside. Which is where we find him, confiding in and living in symbiosis with nature, mainly mimicking an oriole’s flutey whistle, sorting out firewood and irrigation, and brooding on enemies old and new, such as the Jehovah’s Witness who recklessly shows up at his house one morning, or Ettore Mibaloni, a journalist who was his longtime critic. He aspires to achieve humility: not easy, especially for someone like him. He would like to get rid of all the things that are weighing him down and which stop him from feeling truly liberated; he would like to rid himself of the jealousy he harbours for his often-absent wife (a woman of many airports), and of the influence on his being that his mother and aunt Vanda seem still to wield. They weigh him down also in terms of stuff: boxes and boxes of books, letters, pictures, and the rest, which he dreams of turning into a great big bonfire. But he never actually does that, just as he never makes peace with “that asshole” Mibaloni. The path to humility is made up of continuous obstacles, of stops and starts, where what is important is not getting there, but attempting to.

MICHELE SERRA

was born in Rome in 1954, but grew up in Milan. He began writing at twenty and has never done anything else to earn a living. As a journalist he cut his teeth at l’Unità in Milan, and has also worked with Panorama, L’Espresso, Epoca, Linus, la Repubblica and other newspapers. In 1989 he founded the satirical weekly Cuore, which he ran until 1994. For Feltrinelli he has published two collections of poetry (Poetastro in 1993 and Canzoni politiche in 2000), a novel (Il ragazzo mucca, 1997), two collections of short stories (Il nuovo che avanza in 1989 and Cerimonie in 2002, which won the Procida award), three collections of newspaper columns and opinion pieces (Che tempo fa in 1999, Tutti i santi giorni in 2006 and Breviario comico. A perpetua memoria in 2008), a travel book (Tutti al mare, 1990) and a collection of articles aping prominent political figures and commentators (44 falsi, 1991).
“A stand-out novel: sincere, grotesque, with an extraordinary quality to the language.”

Tuttolibri

“Tony Pagoda, the protagonist of Hanno tutti ragione, is a character that stays with you, lingering long in the mind.”

L’Espresso

“An astonishing baroque first novel.”

Le Monde

Hanno tutti ragione / Everybody’s Right

Even literary critics dream. They dream that the best is not in the past. Paolo Sorrentino’s first novel, Hanno tutti ragione, is that dream come true. It is the story of Tony Pagoda, a Neapolitan singer with a colorful past. We meet him in the early 1980s, in a blooming and wildly happy Italy. Tony is a picaresque hero: he has talent, money, women, and an extravagant lifestyle – but he is not superficial. Among his friends are both extraordinary and miserable specimens, all of whom teach him something along the way. With his exuberant and restless wisdom, Tony is like a contemporary Falstaff, comically revealing the true substance of humans, winners and losers alike. When life gets complicated, Tony seeks silence on a short tour in Brazil. The new setting appeals to him and he decides to stay: first in Rio, then Manaus, where he feels himself crowned by a new freedom (not to mention obsessed with cockroaches). He lives eighteen years in humid, Amazonian exile – and then someone offers to sign a check for an outrageously high sum to bring him back to Italy, where yet a new life awaits.

About Hanno tutti ragione, the critic Antonio D’Orrico has said: “After I had read this beautiful novel I thought of Ezra Pound, who saw the magnificence of Venice and asked God what kind of punishment humans should expect for such an early reward.”

Tony Pagoda e i suoi amici (2012)

PUBLISHERS OF
HANNO TUTTI
RAGIONE:
Arab Countries: Almutawassit
Croatia: Vuković&Runjić
Czech Republic: Dybbuk
France: Albin Michel
Israel: Kinneret
Germany: Aufbau
Netherlands: Lebowski
Serbia: Booka
Spain: Anagrama
Turkey: Everest
UK: Harvill Secker
US: Europa
DOMENICO STARNONE

Federico—Federì in dialect—is a man who lives his life furiously, without the possibility of conciliation. He loathes all kinds of work and above all his own, for the railroad; he is always without a single lira and tormented by the responsibility of a large family, yet he knows one thing for certain: he is destined to be a great painter. But the longer this fate remains fulfilled, the angrier he gets, and the more he lays into Naples, his beloved and detested city, overwhelming everything and everyone with a torrent of shrill and exuberant dialect heavy on obscenities and blasphemy. Topping his list of enemies—the enemies of his genius, or rather of this incoherent, ridiculous man who doesn't want to fall into a life of obscurity and so is constantly reinventing himself—we have his wife, Rusinè, the scapegoat of his disgruntlement. On her Federì unloads all his mania, an earthquake that rumbles through years, indeed decades, damaging his familial relationships and scarring his children, especially his eldest son. It's this son who recounts his crippled father's story, the story of a man locked in his own mind, prisoner of the fanciful lie of his artistic prowess. And if the son's perspective is that of an accusatory witness, it is also rich with a consciousness lost in the Naples of today—in the traces of a childhood and adolescence vivid with paintings, color, creative frustrations and disappointments, unhappiness and levity, truth and misunderstanding.

Via Gemito won the Strega Prize in 2001, as well as the Molinello Special Prize, the Napoli Prize, the Zerilli-Marimò Prize, the Corrado Alvaro National Award, and the Campiello Selection Prize.

DOMENICO STARNONE lives and works in Rome. He has taught high school for many years and is a specialist on the didactics of Italian and history (Fonti oralì e didattica, 1983). The experience of teaching led him to write Ex cattedra e altre storie di scuola, originally published at the end of the eighties, and Solo se interrogato. Appunti sulla maleducazione di un insegnante volenteroso. For “Feltrinelli Classics” he has written introductions to Cuore, by De Amicis (1993), Ultime lettere di Jacopo Ortis, by Foscolo (1994), and Conrad’s Lord Jim (2002). He was editor of the cultural pages of “Manifesto,” a newspaper for which he still writes, and he has worked extensively in cinema. Films based on his books include La Scuola, directed by Daniele Luchetti; Auguri, Professore, directed by Riccardo Milani; and Denti, directed by Gabriele Salvatores. In 2010 he published Fare scene. Una storia di cinema (minimum fax); in 2011 Autobiografia erotica di Aristide Gambia (Einaudi), in 2014 Lacci (Einaudi), and in 2016 Scherzetto (also Einaudi).
GUIDO TONELLI

is a particle physicist. He is one of the main protagonists of the discovery of the Higgs Boson at the LHC. He is a professor of General Physics at the University of Pisa (Italy) and a CERN visiting scientist. He is the recipient of Fundamental Physics Prize (2013), and Enrico Fermi Prize from Italian Physics Society.

Genesi / Genesis

‘Perhaps the Greeks were right and Chaos came first. The many observations made by modern physics would seem to confirm that the origin of the material universe lies in the simplest hypothesis: that everything began with a tiny quantum fluctuation in the void.’

What happened in the first few moments of the universe’s life? Has the science of the twenty-first century really given new life to Hesiod’s account of the origins of everything, encapsulated in his splendid, electrifying line: ‘In the beginning there was only Chaos’? And is the universe today the organised and reliable system that it seems, or is it still ruled by Chaos?

In the search for an answer, teams of men and women daily explore the furthest reaches of the material evidence, using huge telescopes and powerful particle accelerators to reconstruct the detail of the subtle mechanisms that gave the wonderful world around us its familiar features, trying to understand the unique and mysterious event that led to the birth of the universe and to gather clues to its purpose.

So could we say that modern particle accelerators, like the ancient Greek accounts, are seeking an answer to the oldest question of all? In that case, the construction of a cosmogony is no longer a matter for specialists, and myth and science ultimately have the same function: to help human beings find their place in the universe, because ‘no civilisation, however big or small, can survive without the epic story of its origins.’
In this century, when everything has become closer and more immediate, we think that the centre of the world is what we see around us, within the reach of our smartphones. The present is the only dimension in which we really live, the one that counts. History has begun to mean less and less to us. But in the distant past, history was part of the world and of our lives. Anyone who clambered over rocky paths, sailed the seas or rode across the Asian uplands, was travelling through history as well as geography. And if we wish to see the past once again playing a part in our lives, we need to set out on those roads again. Alessandro Vanoli’s stories lead us on foot along the ancient trade and battle routes which brought the Persians to the Mediterranean, take us by camel along the spice roads to the Great Wall of China, and accompany us along pilgrimage paths to meet the travellers making their way to Charlemagne’s coronation. Finally, we take a ride on the Trans-Siberian railway, while around us the October Revolution changes our history forever. These lost roads have been trodden by travellers both famous and unknown, and each one marks a milestone in the global map of Europe’s roots. Together they contribute to the network of journeys made by languages and cultures that have merged across the centuries. These travels will teach us that the history of the Old Continent follows paths that lead to distant frontiers of time and space. And we will learn how deep and especially how far our ancient roots extend.
Il ponte della Ghisolfa / Ghisolfa Bridge

Ghisolfa Bridge is a collection of nineteen inter-connected stories published by Giovanni Testori in 1958. It formed part of a larger cycle of works, a kind of “human comedy” entitled The Secrets of Milan, “where everything—names and situations, characters and environments—keeps to itself, intertwines with itself, confirms itself.” Ghisolfa Bridge reflects “the world of Milan’s periphery, populated by poor devils who pull the cart at the factory or to the shops, but also idlers ready for anything, prostitutes and lads learning from the school of life, thieves and bosses licensed to blackmail if not outright to kill, aspiring athletic champions and the shady nouveaux riche.” The characters of Ghisolfa Bridge are all very young, workers, bartenders, who, in a Milan on the brink of the economic boom, struggle to survive, living on the outskirts among the big gray buildings (Roserio, Ghisolfa, Porta Ticinese), going to gyms to cultivate their ambition of becoming cycling or boxing champions, passing their Sundays at the “pictures” or dance halls, falling in love. A poignant portrayal of an erstwhile Milan, Ghisolfa Bridge is the book that inspired Luchino Visconti to make the classic film Rocco and His Brothers.
Eredi / Heirs

“Heirs” is an important new series directed and curated by Massimo Recalcati. It brings together short monographs of authors, that are not weighed down by philological or critical apparatus, but rather provide an account of how one writer’s thinking owes much to his or her forefather. This series will not provide a historical snapshot of a particular line of thought, but will instead reconstruct it from the standpoint of a symbolic debt – of something owed by the subsequent generation to the one that came before.

We will bring together important contemporary teacher and intellectuals to consider the genesis of their own thought and research within the context of the thinking of a predecessor who could be considered a symbolic father-figure.

These short books will therefore not only consist of introductions to the work of the masters, but will also work as a way of highlighting the concept of legacy as something that is always alive and is never really completely exhausted. Legacy will be seen not as the passive acquisition of goods or genes, concepts or intuitions, but as a process, as Freud stated via Goethe, of “re-conquering.”

This series will ask, through very different voices, what it means to be truly the heir of a piece of thinking. What brings one to rethink the teaching of one’s teacher? What is it in it that is still alive?

These questions will move from philosophy to literature, cinema and psychoanalysis, sociology and history of art, and beyond.

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