Svevo's entire work, from its first rather sketchy emergence in *Una Vita* to its full-fledged materialization in *La coscienza di Zeno*, a development that may be summarized as man's constant search for symbiosis with the other. Perhaps Minghelli ought to have elaborated more on the sharp irony inherent in Zeno's fate, as he eventually chooses to step outside the shadow of the other at the end of a novel that seemingly stages the fable of man and the Mammoth in each of its eight chapters. It is nevertheless Minghelli's merit to have intuitively perceived the rich potential buried within Svevo's fable and to have extended its significance beyond a supposedly limited usage.

While the book makes a contribution to Svevo Studies, and, to be sure, will stimulate further debates within the Svevian community, its internal configuration is rather uneven. After a first part convincingly articulated, in which fruitful suggestions are played out with rigour and eloquence, the second part appears to be trapped in its own shadow.

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When the 'Silone Case' first broke in the Italian press in 1996, many people simply refused to believe the story. It was impossible that Ignazio Silone, one of the most celebrated anti-fascists of the 1930s, whose novels had educated a whole generation of people across the world about Mussolini's Italy, could have spied for the very regime he seemed to have opposed. As more and more evidence emerged about Silone's betrayal, it became harder and harder to go into denial about what had happened. Most people now accept that Silone had passed information to the police over a fairly extended period of time. Arguments remain over why and for how long the politician/writer had been a spy. The traditional defence of Silone— that he spied to save, or try and save, his brother Romolo from fascist imprisonment, have now been more or less debunked. Silone had probably been passing information to one specific member of the police authorities since 1919, and appeared to have done so right up to 1929. If anything, the arrest of his brother in 1928 on trumped up bombing charges led to the end of the spying, and not to its beginning. In fact, it seems, the saga of Romolo's arrest led Silone to stop informing, to take a moral decision, and to abandon the Italian Communist Party. Only a few 'heroic' supporters of Silone now try and claim that all the documents are either false or irrelevant.

Elizabeth Leake's interesting book is not aimed at a detailed discussion of the 'Silone case,' but it does take its lead from that case. Leake's aim is to revisit Silone's work (and life) in the light of this startling new information about the man himself. This is done through what Leake terms a "psychoanalytic approach to Silone's texts in light of the archival material the study presents" (10). To this end, Leake examines not only Silone's fiction, but also some of the extraordinary material.
relating to his double life as a police spy. Much of this analysis is convincing and lucid, particularly the personal readings of the ways in which Silone passed through crisis and trauma towards his more successful fiction, as he made a break with the double life of spy/communist militant, but not with a life filled with secrets, guilt and deceit.

Leake maintains that Silone’s fiction was for him a kind of catharsis whereby he exorcised some of the demons of the past through the written word. This kind of reading is then applied to a series of Silone novels, which are ‘re-read,’ with some elegance, by Leake. What emerges is a complicated and multi-layered literary and political figure, who fits uneasily into the Gramscian tradition, which has sometimes been his supposedly natural home. As Leake puts it, “Silone’s texts successfully conceal and reveal simultaneously” (146). Adriano Sofri has called the story of Silone “an Italian tragedy” and adds “one re-reads all of Silone, and one thinks: how could we not have seen it before.” Leake’s work helps us in this re-reading, whilst warning against the dangers of seeing everything—exclusively—through the filter of the ‘Silone case.’

This is not to say that the book is without its problems. Above all, Leake seems rather confused in her placing of Silone within the Italian left. She underestimates the hatred towards Silone on the communist left—Silone was an arch anti-communist after the war and one of the organizers of the Congress of Cultural Freedom. So, when Leake calls Silone a “hero of the Italian left,” she is making an error. Silone was a hero only to part of the Italian left, and not its hegemonic part (the Communist Party). Leake notes this hostility (41), but does not draw the conclusions she might from this information. Moreover, her reading of the ‘Silone case’ is almost inevitably hindered by the immediacy of events, and their fast-moving nature. Finally, Leake does not look at a number of key works in detail. The themes of The Fox (1934) published in Italy in 1958 and the play And He Hides Himself (1944) are spying and treachery. The historian Mimmo Franzinelli mentioned an unpublished work (held in the Silone archive) called Il Dossier, in which an anti-Fascist Minister of the Interior re-reads his own life through the police records of the Fascist period, as if Silone knew that one day he would be unmasked. We must await the promised new biography of Silone by one of the protagonists of the ‘Silone case’—Dario Biocca—before drawing further conclusions about Silone’s life and works. In the meantime, Leake’s work helps us to understand the intricacies of this tormented literary figure.

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In questo libro Anna Maria Torriglia si prefigge il compito ambizioso di esaminare l’ambiente culturale italiano del secondo dopoguerra. La prospettiva offerta è originale in quanto alcune delle molteplici contraddizioni del periodo preso in esame