so onorare con questo lavoro, o prendendo l'avvio da qualcuno dei suoi studi, da qualcuna delle sue riflessioni critiche, arricchendo quindi ed approfondendo il suo discorso, o illuminando momenti ed episodi della sua vita e della sua presenza nel mondo del Novecento. In questo senso il volume costituisce dunque anche un'estensione della figura dello studioso e dell'uomo che molti di noi hanno avuto la fortuna di conoscere personalmente, ed aiuta a mantenerne ancora vivace e feconda l'immagine e la presenza anche dopo la conclusione della sua parabola terrena. E questo è, senza dubbio, il modo migliore di onorarlo e di preservarne il ricordo ed il ruolo di stimolo e di guida anche per le generazioni a venire.

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Raffaele Milani. *The Art of the Landscape*. Trans. Corrado Federici. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009. Pp xii, 212. ISBN 978-0-7735-3547-3 (paper) US. \$29.95.

This study takes as its subject the conception of the natural landscape as an aesthetic category. In locating what Milani describes as the "aesthetic problem of the landscape" (170), the author focuses on the understanding of the natural world within the frame of human sensibility, as an object of contemplation as well as one of beauty. Milani is concerned both with the relationships that humanity has formed with the natural landscape throughout history and with the manner in which the transcendent experience of nature has served as a vehicle for the contemplation of the sacred. Addressing a variety of responses evoked by the landscape, from the psychological to the emotional and the existential, the author calls the reader's attention to how deeply embedded the concept of nature has been as a productive force in the framing of cultural modes of thought and subjective forms of identity. In doing so, Milani reaches beyond the perspective of a history of reception, examining the range of associations formed with landscape, from the terror of the sublime to the unfulfilled desire of a return to the perfect state of Eden. The result is a layered and thought-provoking "morphology" of the landscape, its manifestations in art, literature and the environment, and the range of profound responses it has inspired.

As much a meditation as a critical analysis, Milani's text opens by situating the author's own personal investment in his subject, stating that the text is "a vain attempt to preserve the memory of the wonder and beauty of nature offered to us in so many centuries" (ix). Milani expresses concern that the growing disenchantment with and estrangement from nature has direct implications for humanity's sense of wellbeing and connectedness with the world. Toward this end, the study aims to rekindle the relationship between humankind and nature by drawing together a series of ways in which nature has served as an evocative medium in the shaping of human consciousness and imagination. In this sense, Milani's text also serves as a call to action, a warning that contemporary industrialization and the

severing of ties between man and his awareness of the environment threaten to destroy one of the most fundamental means by which humankind has come to know itself. Confronting the reality of this process, Milani contends, is both a painful and necessary step toward recovering a sense of harmony with nature.

The author shapes his analysis into three parts, with each section relating to a specific entry point into contemplative engagement of the natural world in both reality and representation. Part One, "Pathways," examines the transformative experience of the landscape through modes of human perception, exploring how the emotional experiences of place, having taken root in the human imagination, become translated into forms, such as the travel diary, the *veduta*, or the panorama. The aesthetic pleasures of nature, derived from the wonder and awe that it inspires, give rise to images and sensory recollections that aim to recreate these spectacular encounters. According to Milani, this experience may be mobile as, for example, the delight from the array of sensory experiences unfolding during a city walk, or stationary, such as the proprietary pleasure derived from the unobstructed view of the *belvedere*. In laying out the array of forms of the reflective gaze projected upon the landscape, and their historical manifestations in visual and literary culture, Milani exposes the rich and varied responses they evoke, from the territorial to the sentimental, the delightful to the terrifying.

Part Two, "Categories," traces the evolution of these responses into discrete aesthetic models. Milani constructs a historiographic genealogy of landscape aesthetics, exploring the sentiments and experiences artists, writers, and philosophers sought to derive and to define from their encounters with nature. Here, Milani locates the relationship between Ideal and Real Beauty, a fundamental philosophical debate in the theory of representation since Antiquity, as a shaping force in approaches to nature across historical periods. Moreover, he argues that our responses to beauty have been shaped by memory, sensory impression, and emotional state, and defined in landscape through categories such as wonder, grace, the sublime, and the picturesque. Milani notes that the taste and sensibilities of the Pre-Romantic era, which he defines as roughly from the second half of the eighteenth into the early nineteenth century, may have been one of the most dramatic shifts in perceptive consciousness of nature as a form of spirituality and an object of reflection.

In the text's final and most abbreviated section, Milani unpacks the impressions of some of the most profound elements of natural beauty that have served as leitmotifs for the aesthetic experience of landscape, including mountains, volcanoes, bodies of water, earth, sky, and even ruins. These forms serve as a kind of catalyst for the senses and the imagination, recalling, for example, origins (the Gaia myth), *vanitas* (falling water as a symbol of passing time), or the mythical (a grotto as a reminder of untamed nature).

Drawing from a range of examples and philosophical texts (Kant, Thoreau, Montaigne and Aristotle, to name only a few), Milani's outline of the "networks of judgments and feelings" (170) associated with an aesthetics of nature is twofold: tracing the current of human fascination with nature running through artistic and literary production from antiquity to the contemporary period, as well as defining

the sites (both psychological and environmental) of these intimate and complex encounters with the natural world. Overall, *The Art of the Landscape* serves as a wide-ranging and poetic account of the aesthetic contemplation of the natural world and of humanity's place within it.

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Mafia and Outlaw Stories from Italian Life and Literature. Ed. and trans. Robin Pickering-Lazzi. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007. Pp. viii, 180. ISBN 978.0.8020.9834.4 (cloth), 978.0.8020.9561.9 (paper) \$24.95 .

This slim volume is a curious mixture of imaginative fiction and factual reminiscence intended, in the words of the editor who assembled and translated it, to enable readers "to discover, appreciate, and think about the variety of different ways in which Italian authors and witnesses have spoken about the Mafia as well as related figures or myths bearing upon it" (4). It is hoped that this will also make it possible for distinctions to be drawn between images of this organization in Italian (and more particularly Sicilian) society and its current representation in popular American culture: *The Godfather*, for instance, or *The Sopranos*.

There are ten literary selections arranged in broadly chronological order depicting the operation of the Mafia or its precursors from the nineteenth century and earlier through the Fascist era to more recent times. Seven of them were written by women. Readers familiar with Italian literature will recognize some of the writers included: Giovanni Verga, for instance, whose short story "The Gold Key", first published in 1884, begins the collection, or Grazia Deledda, another Sicilian, represented here by "The Hired Killer" (1928). Some of the most memorable contributions, however, are made by Sicilian authors less well known to North American readers: Luigi Natoli's "The Blessed Paulists", which appeared between 1909 and 1910 in the *Giornale di Sicilia*, or Giuseppe Nuccio's "Testagrossa Agrees" (1911), and Livia de Stefani's "The Mafia at My Back" (1991). The narrative voice, style, and mood in these stories and excerpts differ greatly, but together they provide a varied and convincing image, however dark, of the role secret societies, and the Mafia especially, have traditionally played in Sicilian culture over the centuries.

These literary selections are followed by four "Testimonies", all of them provided by Sicilian women within the last twenty-five years, concerning the often devastating impact the Mafia has had on their own lives or on those of their loved ones, and the manner in which they have bravely tried to retaliate by working *pro bono publico* and openly denouncing the criminals and their political cronies orally, in print, and in pictures.

A brief introduction of twenty pages supplies a succinct cultural and historical framework for all these selections and the organization to which most refer, although the first recorded reference to the Mafia as a criminal association dates only from the