ling to Tuscany, dangers such as those depicted by Dario Argento's thriller film *La sindrome di Stendhal* (1996).

Ross has had to choose only a limited number of authors from rich panoply of possibilities. Her elucidation of Tuscan spaces as sites of "othering" is well supported by the authors she does choose. The book offers a clearly and elegantly written study offering Tuscanophiles ample opportunity for thoughtful considerations of the spaces that determine their own Tuscany.

ANNE URBANCIC

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Cesare Pavese and Renato Poggioli. *"A meeting of minds." Carteggio 1947-1950.* A cura di Silvia Savioli. Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, 2010. Pp. 161. ISBN 978-88-6274-219-1. € 18.

As Roberto Ludovico explains in his ample 31-page Introduction, the English phrase in the title of the present volume is borrowed from a letter sent in 1950 by Renato Poggioli (1907-63) to Cesare Pavese (1908-50) and is used to describe a convergence of intellectual and cultural interests. Poggioli writes: "Vedo con grande piacere che fra noi si realizza a questo riguardo quello che in inglese si chiama 'a meeting of minds'" (15). The recourse to English is explained by the fact that Poggioli is writing from his position as Professor of comparative literature at Harvard University to Pavese, who is working for the Einaudi publishing house in Turin during the years preceding his suicide, in August 1950. Their interests intersect on several levels, including their work as translators: Pavese's translations of American writers and Poggioli's translations of Russian poets. As well, the transatlantic collaboration attested in the 86 letters, which are meticulously annotated by Silvia Savioli, served to enhance the exposure of Italian post-war culture to innovative forms of writing originating abroad. Both Pavese and Poggioli introduced American novelists to the Italian reading public through the publication initiatives of Einaudi. In one letter, we find that both were aware of "l'esigenza di ampliare gli orizzonti della cultura letteraria dell'Italia fascista ricercando, studiando e diffondendo — come critici e come traduttori — i nuovi grandi modelli della letteratura internazionale contemporanea" (17).

Ludovico's Introduction also provides an important framework within which to interpret the exchange of letters, offering insights into Pavese's activities and state of mind in those crucial years between 1947 and 1950, and providing historical information on the relationships between the Einaudi publishing company, Poggioli, and the Italian Communist Party. Both the letters and Ludovico's comments demonstrate dramatically the fact that Pavese felt caught between the Einaudi policies and the need for freedom of expression. In other words, while Einaudi was committed to distributing foreign novelists and poets, the editorial board did not tolerate negative references to Communism, both in Italy and in Russia. At the centre of this controversy were Poggioli's anthology of translated

poetry, titled *Fiore del verso russo*, and the essay *Teoria dell'arte d'avanguardia*. The two manuscripts were sent to Pavese, following an exchange of letters in which Pavese expressed his personal interest in both projects. We learn from the correspondence that the first manuscript was published in 1949 after some delay, but with an "avvertenza"—a disclaimer, with which the publisher distanced himself from Poggioli's critical comments on the Russian poems. With respect to the essay on the avant-garde, delays and silence veiled reluctance on the part of Einaudi to proceed with the publication. In a letter dated February 2, 1950, Pavese responds as follows to Poggioli's questions as to the status of his work: "[I nostri colleghi] Hanno già cominciata l'offensiva: è chiaro che si tratta di *odium nominis* ... Tristi tempi" (126). The manuscript was rejected and eventually published in 1962, by Il Mulino in Bologna.

The book is largely an academic biography of Renato Poggioli, one that pays homage to this scholar's substantial contributions to the diffusion of American literature (Herman Melville, John Steinbeck, John Dos Passos) and literary criticism (Harry Levin, I.A. Richards, René Wellek) by reporting to Pavese recent publications in America, during the period of time in question. In support of the contention that the volume is a snapshot of Poggioli's academic life is the inclusion of Savioli's 12-page concluding essay titled, "La curiosa fortuna del *Fiore*," ovvero note sulle ricezione critica."

"*A meeting of minds*" *Carteggio 1947-1950* complements existing compilations of correspondence by Cesare Pavese, for example, the 2-volume *Lettere*, edited by Lorenzo Mondo and Italo Calvino. One could argue that Ludovico tends to over-read Pavese's psychological state, writing: "[...] l'intera vicenda è frutto e documento da un lato delle indiscutibili, e per altro note, ingerenze della politica e dell'ideologia di partito sulla cultura italiana degli anni del dopoguerra, dall'altro è l'ennesima testimonianza bruciante e palese della fragilità umana di Pavese, della sua debolezza e delle sue contraddizioni, che sono però anche l'*humus* della sua arte di scrittore tragicamente moderno" (28). While Pavese's frustrations with the editorial policy of his employer are well documented here, to read such expressions as a prefiguration of suicide is somewhat problematic, as is Ludovico's tendency to conflate the empirical author and the implied author. The volume, nonetheless, is a valuable resource, the product of careful research on the part of Savioli and, as such, it shines new light on the political, intellectual, and literary dynamics of post-war Italy.

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Lina N. Insana. *Arduous Tasks: Primo Levi, Translation, and the Transmission of Holocaust Testimony*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009. Pp. 319. ISBN 978-0-8020-9863-4. \$ 75.

The work of Primo Levi exceeds literary assessments, embracing every branch of knowledge. Lina Insana's *Arduous Tasks: Primo Levi, Translation, and the Transmission of Holocaust Testimony* is a fascinating contribution to the exploration