Stefania Lucamante. *Forging Shoah Memories. Italian Women Writers, Jewish Identity, and the Holocaust*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. Pp. 304. ISBN: 9781137382689. \$90.

Any scholar entering the fields of Holocaust and memory studies in Italy can easily attest to the shadow cast by Primo Levi's provocative testimony of his experiences at Auschwitz. *Se questo è un uomo* and *I sommersi e i salvati* have in many ways worked to address Adorno's queries on the nature of art after the horrors of the concentration camps. Not only have these two texts engendered a vibrant discussion of the Jewish experience in Italy, but they have also provided a lens for reading the many other works that speak to the event and its enduring aftermath. Although the cultural and historical significance of Levi's contributions remains indisputable, the almost absolute primacy of his narratives, and of those of other male writers, in contemporary academic discourse reveals a deep-seated tendency toward privileging an inherently male perspective. In *Forging Shoah Memories: Italian Women Writers, Jewish Identity, and the Holocaust*, Stefania Lucamante creates a space for examining the narrative contributions of an often marginalized constituency. Her study advances a detailed and compelling analysis of the works of seven Italian women writers who attest to the profoundly gendered experience of Jewish identity in the Nazi-run laggers and mainstream Italian society. In so doing, she attempts to bridge what she has aptly termed the "Italian Jewish women writers' gap" (4). This attempt culminates in a profoundly fruitful investigation that, through the unheard voices of women, reveals a number of representational strategies capable of shedding light on the "obscure, yet important details" of one of the most influential events of the twentieth century (14).

Lucamante divides her study into three major sections organized chronologically and according to a suggested taxonomy. In Part One, she begins with the ostensibly more conventional accounts written by survivors of the camps. In the works of Liana Millu and Edith Bruck, Lucamante traces an initial move away from a predominantly nonfictional approach toward the adoption of genre hybridizations that allow these writers to transcend the perceived limits of existing representations. Lucamante teases out the way in which, in the works of Millu and Bruck, the experience of the camp is filtered through an intensely personal exploration of its effects on their bodies. This exploration—which manifests as a painful, almost physical necessity to bear witness and which speaks to the unspeakable—enables the women to provide insights not only into the more unsettling events of

the camp, but also into the larger mechanisms shaping the quotidian experiences of the Italian female body politic. This expanded conception of a Jewish Italian female identity reverberates through the testimonies of those women who, although part of the same generation as Millu and Bruck, produced works several decades after the initial wave of Shoah memoirs. In the chapter that follows, Lucamante analyzes the contributions of Lia Levi, Rosetta Loy, and Giacomina Limentani to a literary corpus concerned with discerning those elements that set the Italian Jewry apart from its other European counterparts. She demonstrates the means by which their works, which re-examine the social circumstances resulting from the 1938 racial laws and which endeavor to destabilize the enduring myth of the *italiani brava gente*, give new life to the ethical charge advanced by their literary predecessors. This charge, she suggests, is embedded in the notion that only an openness to the Other can prevent history from repeating itself.

After this incisive, if brief, exploration of works largely unfamiliar to the English speaking public, Part Two turns the reader's attention to a fictional work fundamentally concerned with history: Elsa Morante's *La storia*. In this section of her discussion, Lucamante dedicates two chapters to revisiting the "genesis, ideology, and reception of Morante's controversial novel" (15). Her analysis recasts this novel, and indeed Morante's larger body of work, as both an attempt at narrating events from the perspective of erased memorial lineages and as a personal search for her own latent Jewish identity. By identifying the multiple authorial intentions underwriting the text, Lucamante paves a way for the discussion of *La storia* as a work situated between memory and postmemory. Her engagement with postmemory, which reaches its pinnacle in her discussion of Helena Janeczek's *Lezioni di tenebra* and *Le rondini di Montecassino* in Part Three, represents one of volume's most significant contributions to current academic inquiry. In a social and political climate marked by the erasure of memory, bringing attention to the unacknowledged memorial inheritances of past generations may be the only way of changing the course for the future. As a work concerned with "the diligent pursuit of goodness for the sake of others," *Forging Shoah Memories* underlines the necessity of creating communities willing to listen to the voices and experiences of those that went before (247).

While Lucamante's analysis provides a wealth of discursive platforms that are sure to promote a deeper understanding of the various ways in which Italian women writers can and should provoke an ethically charged encounter with the often forgotten experiences of the Shoah, the evocative nature of her work

is somewhat undermined by its stylistic opacity. At times, the very language of the study reproduces the complexity of the issues examined and the reader loses sight of the connections made. The text also exhibits some slight translation issues, particularly in the excerpts drawn from the work's primary sources, which may hinder comprehension on the part of its English speaking readers. Despite these limitations, Lucamante's investigation offers an invaluable resource for those working on memory studies, women's autobiographies, and representations of the Holocaust.

BEATRICE MABREY

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Hava Aldouby. *Federico Fellini. Painting in Film, Painting on Film*. Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 2013. Pp. 186. ISBN: 9781442613270. \$29.95.

Hava Aldouby's *Federico Fellini: Painting in Film, Painting on Film* is an intriguing attempt to identify and valorize the presence of art-historical references in Fellini's cinema, especially in films made between 1965 and 1980. It is a study which engages in its own way in the debate on whether the Fellini of the mid-60s and beyond was more of an ironic postmodernist nihilist or a committed purveyor of a creative cinema of metaphysical immediacy. Aldouby's overall position is that Fellini was very aware of poststructuralist currents and of the crisis of subjectivity and expressivity in contemporary art, but that he nevertheless "plays the postmodern trope of intertextuality against the grain, employing contemporary form in the service of an essentially romantic project" (13). Painting, for Aldouby, is the primary vehicle Fellini uses for engaging in this project.

Aldouby begins her essay by noting the paucity of serious attention that has been paid to the presence of painting in Fellini's works. This is attributable to Fellini's own tendency to posture himself as substantially resistant to or ignorant of highbrow culture and intellectual theorizing and inspired instead by popular art forms such as comic strips, variety theater, and the circus. More important for the critical neglect, however, is what Aldouby sees as Fellini's substantially different approach to the pictorial intertext vis-à-vis directors such as Godard, Pasolini or Greenaway. These filmmakers operate a meta-discursive and alienating