Mark Epstein, Fulvio Orsitto, and Andrea Righi, edited by. *Totalitarian Art: The Visual Arts, Fascism(s) and Mass-society*. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2017. Pp. 470. ISBN 978-1-4438-2874-1.

This collection of essays brings together interdisciplinary perspectives that shed light on the complex relationship between totalitarian regimes, mass media, and the visual arts, starting from Fascism to its various modern and contemporary declinations and appropriations. The choice of the title explicit the editors' dual goal: on the one hand, the editors wish to "[highlight] the relationship between totalitarianisms and the visual arts" (IV); on the other hand, the ironic reference to Pop Art suggests how the common goal of totalitarian regimes is to reduce the participatory element to the minimum, canalizing citizens' creative energies towards the agenda of propaganda or—as in contemporary totalitarianisms—an anaesthetizing consumerism.

The visual arts are present in the broadest sense of the term. In addition to painting, sculpture, and cinema, authors incorporate in the range of analysis "performance" and "plastic arts," such as "architecture, urban planning and the shaping and control of spaces, especially public ones" (XVII). This deliberately broad point of observation has the merit of favouring a multi-faceted perspective, ranging from several media, historical periods, and cultural spaces. The collection winds through six consistent sections, whose purpose is to show the diachronic evolution of the relationship between media, totalitarianisms, and individuals from historical Fascism to the global contemporary movements of the extreme right.

Between these two chronological extremes, a disciplinary challenge of methodological interest opens up: at one extreme, bringing Fascism studies into conversation with those related to contemporary totalitarianisms; at the other extreme, gathering scholars from different disciplines and specializations. Italianists would be interested especially in the first two sections of the book: the first, "Totalitarian Environment: Spaces and Images," consists of four essays that investigate the relationship between propaganda and the visual arts during "historical" Fascism. Alessandra Minervino focuses on a case study of "politicization of religion," specifically that of the double biography of Mussolini and San Francesco, published in 1926 by the Franciscan father Paolo Ardali. Pierluigi Erbaggio focuses on an innovative aspect of the protean phenomenon of the Duce's representations between the wars, namely Mussolini's depiction in Fox and Hearst newsreels. It is

an episode of particular interest, because it dates back to 1927, well before the foundation of Minculpop (1937). Erbaggio shows how the two agencies had been fundamental channels for Mussolini's reception overseas. He also focuses on the peculiar nature of this phenomenon: through careful selection, Mussolini was first presented by Fox and Hearst as a "man of modernity," and then he was gradually transformed into a charismatic celebrity. Of notable significance are also the first two essays of the section, which analyze the manipulation of urban spaces by the Fascist regime through the case studies of Genoa and Verona.

The second section, "Totalitarianisms, Italian Cinema and Beyond," traces the representations of Fascism in Italian cinema from WWII to the present. Angelo Fàvaro's essay, "From Moravia to Bertolucci: The Monism of The Conformist," will be among the most cited of the collection. This brilliant contribution is an analysis of the cinematic adaptation of Moravia's novel *The Conformist*. Fàvaro underlines how Moravia did not hesitate to give a very pessimistic and tragic vision of the protagonist—after all, as he wrote in a letter to Amelia Rosselli, his goal was "to write a book that was a tragedy: there are no good and bad men, just characters with their own destinies"—while Bertolucci gave a much more nuanced and problematic representation of the protagonist. The comparison between the two media is made even more interesting by the analysis of the film's treatment, recovered by Fàvaro among the papers of the Archivio Centrale dello Stato. This section also includes a study on the relationship between Pasolini's *Salò* and his reflection on Fascism and Neocapitalism.

The other sections digress from the context of Italian studies to open up to a comparative analysis. The third section, "Totalitarian Aesthetic and Politics," includes a series of essays that analyze Nazi Germany and the similarities between the Vichy regime and Fascism's communication strategies. Finally, the last essay examines Salvador Dalí's ambiguous political position during Francoism. The last three sections instead collect analyses on the dictatorships in South America (with a particular focus on the case of Uruguay) and challenging reflections on the communicative strategies of recent totalitarian trends in Germany, Sweden, and the United States.

Among the greatest merits of the book is its interdisciplinary nature, which will appeal to readers of different degrees of expertise (students as well as scholars) and research fields. In addition to scholars of European national literatures and cultures, this volume will surely attract the interest of scholars of Fascism and Totalitarianism. Those who will most benefit from this collection are certainly

Visual Culture scholars, who can take advantage of the reflections on the specificity of the different visual media and their possible uses for inclusive and participatory purposes.

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Giovanni Gerometta. *La mia vita — la mia arte. My Life — My Artwork. Ma vie — mon oeuvre*. Beaupré, QC: Galerie d'art Mont-Sainte-Anne, 2017. Pp. 320. ISBN 978-2-9816691-0-0.

Volume redatto in tre lingue (francese, inglese e italiano), e corredato di numerose fotografie e tavole, questa è l'autobiografia di Giovanni Gerometta (nato a Sesto al Reghena, Pordenone nel 1934), artista e mosaicista italo-canadese, che si è affermato nel mondo artistico della provincia del Québec e, insieme alla moglie Andrée Tremblay, gestisce da molti decenni la Galerie d'Art Mont-Ste-Anne di Beaupré. L'autore presenta il libro con modestia come la storia di un immigrato italiano in Canada, in particolare di un giovane friulano di talento, il quale, appena licenziatosi alla Scuola Mosaicisti del Friuli di Spilimbergo e lusingato dal richiamo del nuovo mondo, arriva speranzoso in Canada nel 1954 ma incontra ingenti difficoltà a trovare impiego stabile nel settore musivo. Si prova nel campo della ristorazione e perfino in quello dello sport, imparando a sciare e diventando maestro di sci alquanto rinomato. Ma, in parte a causa di problemi di salute, nel 1976 avviene una svolta nella sua vita quando decide di riprendere l'arte in modo definitivo. Dipinge paesaggi e ritratti e nature morte, e dagli anni 1980 in poi riceve molte commissioni per murali in mosaico che lui disegna ed eseguisce per edifici pubblici, soprattutto nella provincia del Québec. In tempi recenti crea anche deliziosi mosaici di dimensioni ridotte per collezionisti privati.

Il libro riporta in copertina l'autoritratto duplice di Gerometta pittore e mosaicista. La parte narrativa che occupa la prima metà dell'autobiografia (11–139) non solo racconta i fatti della vita, ma trasmette con forza i sentimenti che hanno accompagnato l'itinerario personale e artistico del protagonista, specialmente la tristezza e delusione provate al rendersi conto degli ostacoli che gli impedivano di praticare in Canada la sua arte del mosaico. Ma, oltre alla frustrazione e al disappunto, trapela dal testo soprattutto la sua grande umanità e affettuosità,