

instance, anti-Semitism emerging in consequence of emigration from Muslim countries, in left-wing political parties in support of PLO, and so on. He does not consider at length historiographical details, but rather seeks to inform the ordinary reader about the ambiguities inherent in many apparently neutral political assumptions. Particularly relevant in this case are the subsections *L'Islam e la rielaborazione dei temi antisemiti* and *Neonazismo e antisemitismo: l'"invenzione" del mondialismo* — that offer a clear insight into anti-Semitic discourse emerging both from Islamic countries and anti-globalist movements.

The study is not devoid of merit. Although it does not intend to engage with contemporary scholarship, Luzzato Voghera's work offers a brief introduction that is particularly suitable to an ordinary reader who wants to educate himself on some basic notions of anti-Semitism. Therefore, this monograph is recommended to undergraduate students who are approaching the topic for the first time.

Federico Dal Bo, *Marie Curie postdoctoral fellow
at the Autonomous University of Barcelona*

Maria Anna Mariani. *Primo Levi e Anna Frank. Tra testimonianza e letteratura*. Roma: Carrocci, 2018. Pp. 161.

How might a literature for others ultimately corrode the personal domain of the witness-survivor? Would a phenomenology of fictional identities unlock dialogical spaces for a collective ownership of an unspeakable tragedy?

Maria Anna Mariani's latest project, *Primo Levi e Anna Frank. Tra testimonianza e letteratura*, charts meaningful trajectories to these challenging questions, meeting the reader in the in-between space of history and fiction. The text provides an imaginative encounter between two paradigmatic literary and popular figures: the chemist Primo Levi and the young Anne Frank. Through close textual reading and dialogue with a variety of theoretical voices (Agamben, Bettelheim, Ozik), Mariani compares Levi and Frank's literary experiences in the light of ownership and explores their posthumous figures as characters. By situating the conversation on the double nature of survivorship that remains forever indebted to the responsibility of testimony, the study highlights the complexity of fictionalized images in line with what Levi calls the "sin of fiction," a vital obscenity. Can fiction decrease the authenticity of the testimony or does it allow for an expansion of the universality of human values?

Mariani opens her work focusing on an apparently insignificant detail: the title of the first English translation of Levi's testimony as *Survival in Auschwitz*,

later edited in the more appropriate version, *If This Is a Man*. The author delves into that emblematic mistake in the title's that, eventually, becomes infact, the first version moves our eyes from the event to the vulnerability of life soon after liberation from the camp. Furthermore, Mariani examines the structural function of pronouns "noi" and "tu" that Levi frequently employs to suggest a sense of rebellion or an unsettling inadequacy: "Il soggetto è un tu martellato da domande che mettono in discussione il suo stesso esser in vita e gli proiettano contro un senso di inadeguatezza" (33). In order to "espiare il proprio debito di presenza," (p?) the author also recalls Didi-Huberman's eulogy of an imperfect survival in contrast with Agamben's one-dimensional appeal to the authenticity of witnessing (*Muselmann*). Instead, Mariani suggests that the testimonial voice acknowledges its partiality so that it becomes "impersonal," mirroring the opacity between biological and political life, that is, what the Lager perpetuates.

The following two segments introduce the reader to the possibility of escapism when looking at fictional characters. Tracing back Levi's scientific interests in the animal world (*Il sistema periodico* e *La ricerca delle radici*) Mariani explores the moments in which the "I" unveils "un modo diverso di dire io" (53). By focusing on compelling representations of mediators, Mariani unites Levi's urgency to speak to Roland Barthes' "brusio della parola" as well as Wolfgang Iser's phenomenology of reading that "si fonde con la moderna preoccupazione per la soggettività" (57–59). Similarly, Levi's *Quaestio de Centauris* illustrates the auto-hybridization of the self and otherworldly creatures through which he denounces the negation of the existence of the camp.

The second part of the volume follows multifaceted portrayals of an iconography of Holocaust victimhood: Anne Frank's diary-testimony. Anne's life has often coincided with her appeal as exemplary victim, innocent face, or common girl. Through a genealogical approach, Mariani investigates cause-effect dynamics of such exemplary victimhood (i.e., in Philip Roth's fictions, popular Korean magazines or even the theatrical representation of a hopeful image of femininity in the late 1990s). Furthermore, the author traces back Anne's self-edited journal and Otto Frank's double role of curator and author to claim that an international success was already embedded in the styles and themes chosen upfront. What would Anne have looked like and what types of messages would she have conveyed to the world? It appears that the long gestation of the story has been contaminated so that it would be more universal and contain our modern anguish, almost as a shield against the past. To support her view, Mariani recounts Anne's fictionalized face in Levi's words: "una singola Anna Frank ci commuove più che gli innumerevoli altri che hanno sofferto proprio come lei

[...]. Forse è meglio così: se fossimo capaci di contemplare le sofferenze di tutte quelle persone, non saremmo capaci di vivere” (90).

One prominent recodification that involves our two author-characters is in the 1978 symbolic Levian poem “La bambina di Pompei.” Here, Levi compares Auschwitz to Hiroshima whilst forging our representation-eulogy of Anne’s body: “fanciulla scarna,” “membra gentili,” “scolaria di Hiroshima” (103). This universalistic position aligns with Vittorio Sereni’s poem “Amsterdam” or more recently Gunther Anders’ concept of emotional understatement. Mariani argues that “La bambina di Pompei” illustrates a polemic claim against the inability and impurity of humanity to face its own shadows, its dissolution when contextualized in the cold war climate or the scientific power of *techné*. According to the critics, these poetic and linguistic *simulacra* might be the last visual and corporeal deterrent against the dilution of testimonies.

In a provocative questioning of authenticity and testimony, Mariani concludes her work looking at several literary appropriations of Levi and Frank’s figures. It is through the 1994 Jorge Semprun’s *Scrittura o vita* that Mariani examines the paradigmatic meta-literary *dignitas* of a testimonial body (and its words) as the functional trait that mingles history, biography, and existence. Like other fictional works recently published about Levi’s legacy (Paolin, *Conforme alla gloria*, Volland, 2016; Mastragostino and Ranghieschi, *Primo Levi*, Beccogiallo, 2017) or Frank’s image (Auslander, *Hope: A Tragedy: A Novel*, Riverhead Books, New York, 2012), it abandons the threatening adversary of being a witness or a void recipient of others’ deaths and carries forth Levi’s existential trajectory, not, however, without problems of cultural and linguistic annexations. Despite the complex breadth of scholarship on two prominent Holocaust voices, Mariani moves freely in a well-thought provocative outlook. She asks us to reengage cautiously with essential questions of clandestine autobiography, fictional histories of trauma, and reappropriation of a collective sense of retelling the past to recalibrate our affective vision and ethical standpoints.

Giuliano Migliori, *The Ohio State University*

Giuseppe Veltri e Libera Pisano. *L’ebraismo come scienza. Cultura e politica in Leopold Zunz*. Paideia. Torino. 2019. Pp. 158.

Poco più di duecento anni fa Jomtov Lipmann, meglio conosciuto col nome di Leopold Zunz (1794–1886), nel suo *Etwas über die rabbinische Literatur* (Maurer, 1818, tradotto in italiano nel volume in oggetto col titolo *Sulla letteratura rabbinica*) gettò le basi per lo studio scientifico dell’ebraismo, o come l’ha

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