History of Intellectual Culture

www.ucalgary.ca/hic/ · ISSN 1492-7810
2002 · Vol. 2, No. 1

Iacovetta, Franca; Roberto Perin; and Angelo Principe, eds., *Enemies Within: Italian and Other Internees in Canada and Abroad*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000. Pp. ii + 429; illus. CDN$65.00, (cloth).

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Fewer than one percent of Canada's citizens of Italian descent were interned for "national security" reasons during the Second World War by the Canadian authorities on the advice of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. The striking contrast with what took place in Great Britain, where the watchword, on the advice of MI5, was "collar the lot," reveals much about both the nature of the immigrant groups concerned and the state that acted against them.

These are not the only insightful comparisons to appear in the essays collected in this historiographically stimulating volume: further dimensions of the problematic surrounding State action against citizens and legally resident aliens are discussed in contributions on Great Britain, the United States of America, and Australia, and – within the Canadian context – in relation to Ukrainians (during the Great War), German-Canadians, Japanese-Canadians, Communist Canadians (until June 1941), and several hundred anti-Nazi and Jewish refugees shipped from Britain to Canada in 1940. The comparative theme that characterizes almost every one of these essays will ensure mature discussion of the issues of redress campaigns and fabricated collective memory, drawing scholars to the book who are outside the Canadian context and are made uneasy by the relentless, and too little opposed, grinding of the mills of post-fascist revisionism in Italy and elsewhere.

It is of course true that the panicky circumstances of June 1940, with the Wehrmacht apparently poised to invade a virtually defenceless Britain, compounded by Mussolini's "stab in the back" attack on France, Egypt, and Somaliland, were likely to trigger a "great fear" that would open a Pandora's box of anti-alienism, anti-Semitism, and generalized xenophobia latent in the threatened populations. Civil servants and the military were not immune to such sentiments, and even government ministers (Lapointe for example in Canada) might calculate the electoral or intra-party advantage that would accrue from taking a hard line. For the mass of perfectly innocent and harmless settled immigrants, the penalties inflicted upon them, whether actual imprisonment, loss of their livelihood and prospects, or simply the stigma of the "enemy alien" label, were utterly unjustified. In the tragic case of the sinking of the *Arandora Star* with the loss of hundreds of lives of anti-fascist Italians and anti-Nazi Germans, the ultimate penalty was paid (even if some of the survivors found their way into Allied war effort and made remarkable contributions to it).

After the initial panic subsided, decent people in authority at all levels began to apply administrative and even judicial remedies to the plight of those who had been penalised: in Canada, of the 700 Italian "ethnics" rounded up, most were released within a few months and only a handful, who supposedly had declared they

would not abide by the law, remained interned in their comfortable camp and were able to have their group photograph taken still flaunting Fascist insignia and slogans for the camera.

Much of the incidental detail of the internment process described in these essays, from the police-intelligence aspect to the intra-communal betrayals upon which many arrests relied; and from the survival strategies developed – usually with great success – by internees and their families to mitigate their hardships, to the efforts of support groups among the politically concerned of the wider population, provide a fascinating picture of the war period as really experienced by many whom official history has disregarded. Particularly valuable as an overview of all the facts in the case is the careful analysis by Luigi Bruti Liberati, who concludes that "most Italian Canadians were not subjected to arbitrary arrest and internments," going on to write that "It is obviously futile to negate the facts that Italian-Canadian fascism existed and that those who subscribed to it paid the price" (94).

In virtually all the contributions, a serious attempt is also made to address the issues, historiographical and political, that have arisen in recent decades around the vexed questions of Memory and Redress (the capitalization is the reviewer's, to hint at the aura of mystification that has come to surround them). The only, perhaps partial, exception is Lucio Sponza's deeply-felt and scrupulously researched account of the worst, but limiting case - the internment of "Italians" in the U.K., which falls short of a fully-contextualized picture of the events. It dwells exclusively on the "victimization" of the innocent immigrants by both authority and pillaging *lumpenproletariat* almost as if the most serious war in human history was not just then being fought and Italy had not just then entered it in the worst possible alliance.

Most of the other essays touch on these subjects in a less one-sided way, and some, such as Richard Bosworth's, deal with the issues of shallowly revisionist distortion Italo-Australian-style through the cult of "Memory" in considerable depth (and wittily). It is, however, in the final segment of the book that the "uses of the past" occupy center stage. It is here that the three editors of the collection make their own interpretations plain and where they bring fresh light – and fresh air – to certain critical junctures.

Roberto Perin provides a fine dissection of the personal and ideological trajectory of Mario Duliani, one of the leading lights of Italo-Canadian intellectuality and an icon of the campaign for "redress." This brilliant, highly ambivalent, and profoundly duplicitous character represents a paradigmatic illustration of the complexities of the whole internment episode in Canada: an opportunistically fervent supporter of the Rome-orchestrated attempt to fascistize the Italo-Canadian immigrant population via a whole array of organizations, initiatives, and propaganda who, when the tide turned, as eagerly denounced his former collaborators to the authorities. In the post-war period, he wrote a fictionalised account of his internment which spread "a veil of innocence" not only over those truly wronged in 1940, but over his own murky record as "a compliant instrument of Italian foreign policy who sought to deepen divisions between English and French Canadians in the hope of crippling Canada's war effort" (329). And for Perin, Duliani's "legacy of deception" continues unabated in the "process of whitewashing a painfully ugly chapter in Italian-Canadian history" (326).

In his intriguing, illustrated essay on "Images of Internment," Gabriele Scardellato reveals the photographic evidence of the persistence of fascist allegiance among at least an irreducible core of the internees, who had themselves pictured wearing headgear embellished with Fascist insignia and slogans. The images reveal much that text alone cannot: the well nourished, physically fit appearance of the internees, their access to instruments of leisure, the winter skating, and the summer vegetable plots. Of all the myriads behind barbed wire between 1939 and 1945, these men clearly underwent the least material suffering even if the months or years excised from normal working and social life constituted a real penalty.

The third essay in this final section of the book, by Frances Swyripa, makes a salutary contrast in terms of the relative experience of the internees concerned: non-naturalised Ukrainian labourers, the reluctant citizens of Austria-Hungary, stranded in Canada by the outbreak of the Great War of 1914-1918. Their

fate was far harsher than that of any of the internees of the Second World War in Allied hands with the exception only of the Japanese-Peruvians interned in the United States (but denied the compensation given to their American co-ethnics) and, to a lesser extent, the Japanese-Canadians (who did succeed eventually in obtaining monetary compensation over 40 years after the event). By the same token, the long-running Ukrainian-Canadian campaign for "Redress" would seem to have greater justification were it not for the fact that the contemporary Ukrainian-Canadian population at large did not engage actively in it. Against some mean-spirited local opposition, symbolic statues and plaques have been put up at the sites of camps, but the Ukrainians received neither an apology from government nor any monetary compensation.

The Italian-Canadians on the other hand did succeed in extracting a fulsome if vote-conscious apology from Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, virtually accepting the campaigners' view that the internment had been motivated by racial-ethnic considerations (although so far there has been no follow-up in Parliament nor any compensation award). Franca Iacovetta and Robert Ventresca, in the final essay of the book, strongly contest this "happy ending." They argue convincingly that "The history of Italian Canadians in the Second World War was far more complicated, sordid, and turbulent than the community version," which "fails to convey […] Fascism's popular appeal among immigrants, its totalitarian nature, and the hypocrisy and ironies revealed in the behaviour both of Canadians in general (including state authorities) and Italian Canadians in particular (especially towards each other)" (398-9). They reject the "language of shame" that has swathed the Italian Canadian campaign, compounded as it is by the attempted monetarization of redress, and rightly call for a genuinely historically-informed investigation and discussion of the events and their implications, which at the present time have particular salience in the light of the West's responses to real and supposed terrorist threats.

In 1940 the "fog of war" lay thickly over the attitudes and actions of the embattled governments and populations that remained in the fight against the Axis powers. The stresses of the situation certainly triggered outbreaks of embedded prejudice. As in all wars conducted by totalising modern nation-states, large numbers of harmless and innocent civilians were made to suffer unjustified extra hardships. But no one was deliberately put to death, no one was starved, no one was denied some form of judicial recourse. Given what was happening across Europe and East Asia, culminating in the genocide of millions, this very fact should not be overlooked and may even be accounted creditable.