

of terrorists in power. He argues quite cogently that the seizure of political authority in both cases gave brutal ideologies a wider scope for their criminality. Thereafter, they were able to wreak on the general population the allegedly redemptive brutality previously reserved for only isolated individuals or groups. In one particularly enlightening section, Parry challenges the depiction of Stalin as an exception in the otherwise beatific history of the Russian Left and of Soviet Communism. He dwells on the cult of violence among anarchists like Bakunin and Nechaev and on the gruesome killings carried out by their disciples. Then moving on into the Soviet period, he discusses the staggering number of political executions ordered by Lenin and Trotsky after the civil war as well as during it. According to Parry Stalinism was the logical outgrowth of the terrorist policies which Lenin had adopted to consolidate his power. As a churlish young professor, I used to argue this point with him. I shall do so no longer: the weight of scholarship is now clearly on his side.

Reviewed by PAUL GOTTFRIED

An Empire of Delusions

Mussolini's Roman Empire, by Denis

Mack Smith, *New York: The Viking Press, 1976. 322 pp. \$12.85.*

TO COLLEGE and university students and professors of modern European history and of Italian history particularly, the author, Denis Mack Smith, a Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford, is well-known and esteemed for his scholarly research and publications in Italian history. This book is his latest contribution to the field. Its theme, as he indicates in the Preface, "is how Mussolini deliberately and even care-

fully steered his fascist movement into imperialism and into a succession of wars which eventually left Italy prostrate." It is furthermore "a study of political and military defeat and the reasons for that defeat" and "incidentally . . . of the effectiveness and the dangers of propaganda," which through press, radio, and the educational system "built up a series of convenient myths [which] were intended to make Italy a dominant power in the world, but instead, because Mussolini silenced criticism, led to bankruptcy and destruction."

These statements of the author are thoroughly elaborated in great detail throughout the book, which is a shocking exposé of the nature and development of Italian Fascism and of Mussolini in thought and action from the takeover of the Italian government in 1922 to the disintegration of Fascism and the Duce's loss of power under the impact of the Allied invasions of Italy in July and September 1943 during the Second World War. The book contains much more data on the history of the period, of international relations, and of the foreign and military policies of Britain, France, and Germany, than its title indicates.

The story the author presents with simplicity and clarity of prose in narration, description, and analysis, would be incredible to the reader were it not masterfully constructed almost sentence by sentence in scholarly fashion out of a vast multiplicity of published and unpublished primary and, of course, secondary sources at his command in Italian, English, French, Spanish and German. These included, to mention a few from his bibliography of works cited, the thirty-six volumes of *Opera omnia di Benito Mussolini*, various biographies of, and writings about Mussolini, the original diaries of Ciano and other writings about him, the writings of Nationalist and Fascist journalists, party hierarchs and bureaucrats, intellectuals and academics, contained in Italian Fascist newspapers, periodical, memoirs, reports of Fascist Italian institutes, conferences, and

the Grand Council, photostats of *Segreteria particolare del Duce* (St. Anthony's College, Oxford), diplomatic documents of Italy, Belgium, France, Germany and Britain, and particular political, economic, and military histories and studies.

Through seventeen skillfully organized and beautifully balanced chapters the author develops his story, chronologically through the twenty's and thirty's into the forty's, of dictator Mussolini, his character and ideas, his foreign policy and relations to other powers—European, African, Middle Eastern—his propaganda and myths furthered by himself, his party hierarchy and journalists, creating a Fascist imperialist ideology leading to wars of colonial expansion and ultimately to the destruction of himself and Fascism.

Much of the story is familiar: the aftermath of the Great War and the Paris Peace in relation to Italy, the role of Mussolini and Fascist Italy in relation to the League of Nations and to other states, nations and peoples, the changes in Italian foreign policy from peace and disarmament before 1932 to Fascist imperialism, the invasion of Ethiopia, closer Italian-German relations, the Rome-Berlin Axis, Italy and the civil war in Spain, the Mussolini-Hitler relationship, the *Anschluss* and Munich, the Italian invasion of Albania, the course of events into World War II, Italian neutrality to Italian belligerency, the Italian invasion of Greece, and the defeat of Mussolini's Italy.

What is unfamiliar is *the extent* to which Mussolini and the Italian Fascists were the products of their own propaganda myth making, supplementing or replacing reality, preferring rhetoric, illusion, and appearance to substance, fooling most of the people at home and abroad most of the time and demonstrating to the world the mismanagement, confusion and inefficiency of Fascism and the irresolution, indecision and contradictions of the Duce. Unfamiliar in the story also is *the extent* to which Italian colonial administration is shown to have been incompetent, brutal, and corrupt,

Italian colonization a failure, Mussolini's Roman Empire a colossal economic and financial drain on the homeland, and each of his wars a fiasco.

In addition to the author's splendid, but shocking, description and analysis of Mussolini's foreign policy, of his Roman Empire, of the ridiculous failures of his invasions of Ethiopia, Albania, and Greece, and of the pitiful state of the Italian Army, Airforce, Navy and Intelligence before and during the Second World War to Italy's defeat, the author also develops throughout the book a complete in-depth political, psychological and intellectual biography of Mussolini which is superb, but disheartening. The reviewer can only state that to the reader the story would be unbelievable were it not based on impeccable evidence. The book which is another manifestation of Mack Smith's skill and erudition is to be highly recommended and will be widely read by some with satisfaction, by others with dismay.

Reviewed by HENRY M. ADAMS

A Fervent Egalitarian

Philip Mazzei: Jefferson's "Zealous Whig," translated and edited by Sister Margherita Marchione, *New York: American Institute of Italian Studies, 1976. 352 pp. \$9.95 (paper \$5.95).*

Jefferson's "Zealous Whig" was both a misleading and a fitting title for this bicentennial year presentation of the life and work of Philip Mazzei. The title is misleading in suggesting that Thomas Jefferson plays an important rôle in the book, which in fact he does not. And the title is fitting in that it is an apt description of Mazzei himself: Mazzei was one of