

When Christopher Seton-Watson founded ASMI in 1982, he expressed the hope that one day the Association would possess its own journal. And when I succeeded Denis Mack Smith as Chair in 1992, I rather recklessly suggested that we might realize Christopher's hope before too long. I am delighted that we have been able to do it so soon.

The time is now right for *Modern Italy*. Modern Italian studies are flourishing in the British Isles, and indeed in the English-speaking world, as never before. Non-literary Italian studies have grown as the curriculum of departments of Italian has broadened. Italy has also become of greater significance for European studies, area studies and comparative social and political sciences, while the number of academics working in these fields has increased accordingly. In historical studies, as well, there is an awareness of the continuing relevance of Italy to the history of the Mediterranean as a whole and of Italy as a major source of emigration throughout the 'new world' and as a small but significant colonial power in its own right. Finally, in the last decade there has been greater public interest in Italy due to its recognition as a key partner in the European Union.

Interest in Italy has also been greatly stimulated by events there during the last few years. The very successful 1994 ASMI annual conference on 'The Italian Crisis' has, therefore, provided an ideal subject on which to launch the first edition and I would like to thank all who have contributed articles. In the future, however, we look forward to receiving contributions across a broad range of subjects and, as with this issue, all articles and review articles will be subject to peer review. The editorial team will obviously seek to keep a balance between both periods and subjects. While we welcome articles from all quarters, we are particularly anxious to receive them from ASMI members or ones recommended by them since *Modern Italy* is very much as its name describes it, 'The Journal of the Association for the Study of Modern Italy'.

We are steadily building up a subscription list outside of the membership of ASMI and here members can again help by recommending to colleagues, libraries and institutions that they subscribe.

I must record thanks to a number of individuals and institutions without whose support, moral and material, it would not have been possible to embark on this venture. In the first place I want to thank members of the editorial team, and especially John Dickie and Simon Parker, for their magnificent, unstinting work over the last year or so; secondly, our editorial assistant Mrs Georgina Marshall for making things run so smoothly; thirdly the Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Education at Anglia Polytechnic University for providing Mrs Marshall's services and other vital resources; and the British Academy, the British-Italian Society and the Italian Institute for generously giving financial support for the launch of *Modern Italy*.

You will note the publicity insert for *The Journal of Modern Italian Studies* carried in exchange for similar publicity for *Modern Italy* in the first edition of JMIS. We wish our 'sister' journal every success.

JOHN POLLARD