wonders whether writers—and readers—can escape the twin pressures of the new global system and the novel that has become its emblematic genre.

Italian Life
Tim Parks 2020-07-30
How does Italy really work? The bestselling writer on Italian culture sets out to answer the big question. There is no world for whistle-blower in Italian, though you can absolutely chiudere un’occhio (turn a blind eye). In all areas of public life – community, education, employment – your connections are everything. From the bestselling author of Italian Neighbours, An Italian Education and Italian Ways, Italian Life is a particular reckoning with a beloved adopted country. It takes place in a university in the north. Valeria, a talented young woman from hot, dusty Basilicata, enrols together with thousands of others for a degree course that could take anything between three and ten years to complete, given the vagaries of the system. She has sacrificed a great deal to get here. However, as both Valeria and her rich supporting cast of students and professors will soon discover, there are dark and capricious forces at the institution’s heart. Unfolding into a story of power and corruption, influence and exclusion, Tim Parks’ compelling new book shows that an education is about understanding the workings of a society – in this case one where family, culture and innovation are shadowed by nepotism, bureaucracy and intrigue. Thought-provoking, surprising and always entertaining, Italian Life is a behind-the-scenes look at a paradoxical country: a gripping account of how Italy really happens.

Italian Ways: On and Off the Rails from Milan to Palermo
Tim Parks 2014-05-05
An Italian travelogue describes the trains that traverse the country, from the architecture of old train stations to the new high-speed railways, and portrays the author’s memorable encounters along the way.