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macmillan



THE EMPIRE OF STEREOTYPES

© Robert Casillo, 2006.

Softcover reprint of the hardcover 1st edition 2006 978-1-4039-7239-2
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First published in 2006 by

PALGRAVE MACMILLAN™

175 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10010 and

Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, England RG21 6XS

Companies and representatives throughout the world.

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ISBN 978-1-349-53368-8 ISBN 978-1-4039-8321-3 (eBook)

DOI 10.1057/9781403983213

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Casillo, Robert.

The empire of stereotypes : Germaine de Staël and the idea of Italy /
Robert Casillo.

p. cm.—(Italian and Italian American studies)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-349-53368-8

1. Staël, Madame de (Anne-Louise-Germaine), 1766–1817—

Appreciation—Italy. 2. Italy—Civilization. 3. National characteristics,
Italian. I. Title. II. Series.

DG442.C37 2006

848'.609—dc22

2005056556

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Design by Newgen Imaging Systems (P) Ltd., Chennai, India.

First edition: May 2006

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

To the memory of Rose Casillo

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Acknowledgments

This book is the product of my longstanding interest in Italy and Italian America. As such, it is also the reflection of a period in which questions of ethnicity and national character (or identity) have once again come to the forefront of public consciousness, with considerable if shadowy implications for the historical future. In the case of Italy, which remains a highly visible European nation, these questions are especially vexing in that perceptions of that country continue to be clouded by stereotypes accumulated over a period of at least two millenia. It is my hope that a return to Germaine de Staël's studies of the Italian national character will contribute to the clarification of a subject in which she stands among the most significant of the pioneering investigators.

This book could not have been written without the continuing assistance of the Interlibrary Loan Department of the University of Miami Library, which responded with unfailing courtesy and extraordinary promptitude to my almost unceasing demand for books and articles, many of which, owing to their great age or obscurity, were by no means easy to procure. In writing this book I have also greatly benefited from conversations and correspondence with American and Italian friends and colleagues in a great variety of fields. I am happy to be able to thank at last Carol Bonomo Albright, Massimo Bacigalupo, Casey Nelson Blake, Andrea Carosso, Giuseppe Castorina, Simone Cinotto, Maria Vittoria D' Amico, Isotta Enrici, Joe Falik, Ferdinando Fasce, Avrom Fleishman, Giovanna Franci, Patrizia Fusella, Fred Gardaphe, Cristina Giorelli, Elena Lamberti, Valeria Lerda, Giuseppe Lombardo, Martino Marrazzi, Frank Palmeri, Ross Posnock, Franco Minganti, Mario Maffi, Jill Mangone, Louis Mangone, Andrea Mariani, Franco Mulas, Gigliola Nocera, Maria Parrino, Stanislao Pugliese, Perri Roberts, Ilaria Serra, Giuseppe Sertoli, David Simpson, Federico Siniscalco, Thomas Skipper, Mihoko Suzuki, Anthony Julian Tamburri, Lina Unali, and Robert Viscusi. Many of my Italian friends helped me in my work by inviting me to teach and lecture in Italy, and thus gave me the chance to examine its people and culture at first hand. However, as a student of Italy I am most indebted to John Paul

Russo, my colleague at the University of Miami, with whom I have discussed my work on countless occasions, and whose vast erudition and good sense have been of invaluable help to me both in saving me from errors and in expanding the scope and depth of my argument.

To my family I owe special gratitude for the help and encouragement they have extended to me in all my academic efforts. In many ways my paternal grandparents are at the origin of my interest in Italy, as they introduced me to the Italian scene from North to South when I was at a most impressionable age. It gives me great pleasure to be able to dedicate this book to the memory of my grandmother, Rose Casillo. Remembering fondly my visits to Italy in the company of my father, mother, and brother, I very much regret that my father will not be able to see the finished form of this book, which he had been expecting with great anticipation. Yet I look forward to presenting it to my mother and brother as well as to my Italian American aunts, uncles, and cousins. My daughter Jane, who has closely watched the stages of the book's composition and revision, continues to inspire me and will be, as usual, my most demanding critic.