Annual Conference 2016

THE FORCE OF HISTORY
CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF MODERN ITALY

ABSTRACTS

25 November  IHR University of London, Senate House
26 November  ICI Italian Cultural Institute Belgrave Square
In this paper we study the rise of the Sicilian mafia at the end of the 19th century and its impact on medium-term and long-term economic outcomes, state capacity and political competition. Recent historical and economic research has focused on the origin of the Sicilian mafia in the rich export-oriented areas of citrus cultivations and sulfur mines. However, for most of the 20th century the Sicilian mafia has been associated with the rural wheat-cultivated latifundia.

The new hypothesis, which we develop and empirically substantiate, is that the mafia’s expansion in the rural areas was triggered as a response to the rise of socialist peasant movements starting in 1893. Following the very severe drought and agrarian crisis, the Fasci dei Lavoratori spread among Sicilian peasants, who organized to demand better contractual relationships and higher wages, and landowners turn to the mafia to counter these movements. Using historical sources on the distribution of the Sicilian mafia in the 19th century and on rainfall and drought intensity in 1893, we document a large response of peasant organizations and then the spread of the mafia within Sicily. We also show that the mafia presence before 1893 acted as a deterrent to the emergence of the Fasci, downplaying the claim that the mafia was partly responsible for it.

We then exploit this historical causal relationship between the drought intensity in 1893 and the mafia expansion to investigate the impact of the mafia on political institutions, political competition mortality rates, education outcomes and long-term economic outcomes at municipality level. Our results indicate a sizable impact of the mafia on literacy in the medium-term, and very large impact on political competition, and also long-term impacts on education and income extending into the decades following World War II.

Enrica Asquer

**Writing to the regime: conflicts and contradictions in fascist Jews’ letters to Demorazza**

Lived experience of Jewish people under Fascism and after the proclamation of the ‘Racial Laws’ may offer a precious occasion to challenge the binary model of consent/coercion. This is particularly true if we consider those who had declared themselves fascists. In Autumn 1938 the racial texture of the Fascist ideology became undeniable, forcing Jews carrying PNF’s membership card to face a grievous contradiction. The Nation that, even with ambivalences, had granted Jews the juridical emancipation was exploited in order to realize a radical transformation of the conceptual basis of Italian citizenship that threatened Jews’ material and immaterial belongings. How did they face this contradiction?

In order to answer this question, an almost ignored archival source may be useful: the letters and personal dossiers that Italian citizens of openly ‘Jewish race’ submitted to the General Directorate for Demography and Race (‘Demorazza’), in order to obtain the so-called ‘discrimination’. This exemption mechanism introduced by the anti-Semitic Legislation provided a derogatory treatment for those who proved to be particularly devoted to the Nation by submitting a documented application.

My paper will draw on a sample of hundreds of letters and personal dossiers submitted to Demorazza by Milanese Jews who were members of the Fascist party until they were expelled in 1938 on racial grounds. Focusing on their personal narratives, alongside with the material proofs they presented in their dossiers (e.g. photographs, family memories, IWW medals), I will investigate the discursive strategy they built up, in order to strike a balance between their former (real or declared) adhesion to the regime and their actual situation of exclusion. Drawing on Natalie Zemon Davis’ methodological lesson, I will show that these strategies indirectly tell us something of those writing and, in particular, the contradictory but powerful idea of Fascism (and Nation) which had been at the base of their closeness to the regime.

Tommaso Baris

**L’ACCUISA DI ASSOCIAZIONE MAFIOSA NEGLI ESPOSTI ANONIMI TRA REALTÀ ED AUTORAPPRESENTAZIONE DEL REGIME FASCISTA**

Nel suo importante volume *La mafia durante il fascismo* del 1992 Christopher Duggan metteva in evidenza la natura strumentale dell’accusa di relazione con il mondo mafioso nella vicenda di Cucco, considerando quella connessione pretestuosa e funzionale alla rimozione del ras palermitan. A partire da quella vicenda il richiamo alla relazione mafiosa divenne però un motivo ricorrente negli esposti anonimi che animarono la lotta politica sotterranea. Il sistema della diffamazione divenne, come ha brillantemente spiegato Salvatore Lupo, una caratteristica degli scontri tra le diverse anime del fascismo, a tutti i livelli e i materiali denigratori presero ad esemplarsi su una rappresentazione, al contrario, dei valori sostenuti pubblicamente dal regime. Attraverso l’analisi di tali materiali, conservati presso l’Acs, si cercherà di inquadrare l’accusa di connessione mafiosa nel quadro della contro-rappresentazione dei valori del fascismo che ovviamente si attribuiva agli avversari...
Richard Bosworth

Fascism and other Italian histories in the emotions of Claretta Petacci and her family

In his delightful Fascist voices, Christopher Duggan concluded with a list of comments by visitors to the San Cassiano cemetery expressing on-going devotion to the Duce studded with ‘religious phrases’ and of ‘a very intimate quality’. In Duggan’s account, at Predappio at least, Mussolini’s ghost was alive and well (still full of menace in contemporary Italy). Yet, when it comes to ghosts from the ventennio, the one who has been recorded (in the Giornale di Brescia in 2011-2) as actually appearing (outside the elegant Vassalli gelateria at Salò) is Claretta Petacci, the Duce’s last lover (twenty-nine years his junior). Petacci is another much recalled figure in today’s Italy, with many popular histories and other media, as well as tourist sites, especially around Lago di Garda, invoking the ‘woman who died for love of Mussolini’. Perhaps, then, there is a case that Mussolini’s body and its ‘Love Story’ appealed at least as much to post-war Italians, as did his mind. In that understanding, memory of his sex life lives on rather more seriously than does knowledge of the theory and practice of Fascism. Examining this possibility, in this paper, I shall explore the extensive Petacci diaries, which have become as significant a source on the regime and the dictator as the celebrated Ciano diary. Moreover, further family papers, kept at the Archivio Centrale, allow insight into Petacci-style fascism, Petacci-style Catholicism, Petacci-style (Roman) snobbery and social ambition, Petacci-style business dallying and Petacci-style familial. I shall read the Petacci family as a microcosm of the effect on Italians, before and after 1945, of Mussolinian Fascism.

Mirco Carrattieri

Who is afraid of Predappio? The debate about a national museum of fascism in Mussolini’s birthplace

In 2014 Giorgio Frassineti, the left-wing mayor of Predappio, the small town in Romagna region where Mussolini was born in 1883, announced his aim of creating there a national museum dedicated to Fascism. The venue should be the local “Casa del Fascio” (House of Fascism), an enormous building covering 2,400 square metres, which was built in the 1930s as part of an urban project to reshape the city to glorify Mussolini, but currently in a state of abandon and disrepair. Frassineti’s main purpose is to reshape the status of his town, that nowadays, as maintains the house in which Mussolini was born and his tomb, is a place of pilgrimage for a new generation of neofascists, that can find there souvenirs of questionable taste. But he stated that he also wants to force Italy “to settle its accounts with the past” and “to fight ignorance and the trivialization of history.”

Italy’s government agreed to contribute to the six million euros needed to renovate the building in time for a planned 2019 opening; and also local administration are discussing this topic. In fact, the project has so far received a big care outside Italy (with services on Cnn and Japanese TV) but a weak concern in Italy; almost until February 2016, when it was relaunched by an article on the national press, subscribed by 50 distinguished historians, in support of Frassineti’s effort. Other scholars replied; and a harsh debate rose up in academic journals, but also in general media and even social networks. Among the most important issues, still before than contents, the advisability of the project, since the risk to reinforce Duce’s myth; the nature of the building (museum or documentation centre or anything else?); the venue, which seems to be peripheral and questionable.

In the present paper, I will try to follow this debate at different levels in order to better understand the state of collective memory and of history as a discipline in the Italian context.

Nick Carter

I’m busy flying. Remembering Italo Balbo: aviator, pioneer, adventurer; squadrists, fascist, murderer

This paper explores the distorted, divided and repressed memory of Fascism and its impact on Italian political culture through an examination of the official commemoration of one of the regime’s ‘most glamorous and competent leaders’ (Segrè 1987, 148), Italo Balbo. Possessed with ‘immense demagogic and organisational abilities’ (Corner 1975, 173), Balbo rose to prominence in the early 1920s as the Fascist Ras of Ferrara and was a key figure in the March on Rome. A hugely popular personality in Fascist Italy, it was as Air Force minister that Balbo cemented his heroic reputation, leading round-trip transatlantic military flights to Brazil (1930-1) and the United States (1933). The ‘great cruises’ also turned him into an international celebrity. Balbo was killed by Italian friendly fire over Tobruk in 1940.

For many years after the war, the Aeronautica Militare (AM) maintained a studied silence over Balbo’s aerial exploits and his pivotal role in its early development, which included the construction of the AM’s imposing headquarters in
Rome. Since the 1990’s however, the AM has re-embraced Balbo: in 1996, it erected a bust of Balbo outside the main entrance of the ministry building; in 2002, the 31st Wing of the AM proposed naming a square after Balbo at its Ciampino airbase. The AM’s emphasis has been – and remains – on Balbo the aviator, pioneer and adventurer. Missing from this narrative is Balbo’s violent past as a leading Squadrist, his important role in Fascism’s rise to power and subsequent dictatorship, and his probable complicity in the 1923 murder of the anti-Fascist priest Don Minzoni. The paper examines the factors behind the official rehabilitation of Balbo and, in doing so, considers the broader processes of conscious or unconscious amnesia and selective and active memorialization surrounding Fascism – central themes of Christopher Duggan’s last project.

Carolina Castellano

CRIMINAL GROUPS IN CAMPANIA BETWEEN FASCISM AND WWII: A CASE-STUDY

Only recently has the Camorra become the object of scientific socio-historical research. This applies especially to the Fascist era. Whilst historians of the Sicilian Mafia have long denied the stereotype according to which Fascism would have defeated the Mafia, which would have taken power thanks to the Allied invasion of the island of Sicily in 1943, we still have little evidence about what happened in Campania. In 1955 the killing of a broker in food farming, Pascalone ‘e Nola, drew the attention of national and international public opinion concerning the illegal, violent powers which controlled this economic sector in Campania, powers which seemed to have survived the fascist repression of 1926–27.

The few socio-historical studies concerning the decades from 1920 to 1950 supply evidence of the survival of criminal power in the region, in spite of the military repression organized at the very beginning of the fascist era in the province of Caserta. According to the social memories collected in the 50s, Fascism seemed to have found strong common ground with the violent and illegal powers controlling the territory of Naples and its metropolitan area.

My research intends to investigate the military and judicial repression in the territory of Caserta: What kinds of criminality were confronted by the mission of 1926–27? Did political instrumentalization take place, and to what degree? This paper concentrates mainly on the judicial languages and the practices of the 1920s and 1930s: How present was the notion of the “camorra”, which had been totally ignored by the regime, together with that of the “mafia”, in the elaboration of the criminal code of 1930? How was it applied to the urban and agrarian conflicts? In the light of these questions I will thus discuss certain significant judicial cases that took place in the 1920s and 1930s.

The paper will be based on the following sources: judicial proceedings of the Court of Appeal, Naples and of the local Tribunal in Santa Maria Capua Vetere (Caserta); local newspapers (il Mattino, Napoli); sources from the Police Archive in Naples (fondo Questura).

Vittorio Coco
CHRISTOPHER DUGGAN, LA MAFIA E IL FASCISMO

L’intervento si concentra su alcuni dei caratteri della repressione della mafia da parte dello Stato fascista, prestando particolare attenzione ai suoi riflessi politici. Come è stato ormai acquisito dalla storiografia, dobbiamo distinguerne almeno tra due fasi. Nella prima, che coincide con la campagna antimafia del prefetto Mori della seconda metà degli anni Venti, ciò che il regime ricercava era visibilità e consenso. In questo momento, dunque, la questione della mafia era non soltanto largamente presente nel dibattito pubblico, ma utilizzata politicamente a tal punto da portare all’errore prospettico chi – come Christopher Duggan – la prendeva in considerazione prescindendo dalla repressione concreta. La seconda, invece, è l’azione di contrasto degli anni Trenta, condotta sotto forma di intelligence da un organismo modellato su quelli contemporanei di indagine politica come l’Ora. Tale azione corrispondeva ad una scomparsa del tema della mafia dal dibattito pubblico (alla stampa fu vietato di utilizzare lo stesso termine), nell’ambito di una propaganda di regime che parlava di una Sicilia ormai pacificata. Restando soprattutto all’interno di quest’ultimo contesto, l’intervento si propone di mostrare come la questione della mafia mantenesse invece una sua importanza, non soltanto da un punto di vista generale, relativo alla gestione della pubblica sicurezza da parte del fascismo, ma anche più specifico, della lotta politica locale. Anche se, ovviamente, ciò non avveniva più nell’ambito di roboanti campagne giornalistiche, ma di rapporti riservati di alti funzionari al ministero.

Paul Corner

DICTATORSHIP AS EXPERIENCE: PERSPECTIVES AND PROBLEMS

The paper examines certain of the more recent perspectives on dictatorship, looking in particular at the complex relationship between the dictator, the dominating élite and the people. Extending its range beyond that of the ‘classic’
totalitarianisms, the paper argues for a more nuanced approach to the question of popular support for or resistance to the regime and suggests that many of the old binaries concerning popular attitudes need to be revised, with a consequent readjustment of the roles often attributed to violence, to ideology and other cultural factors, and to the varied seductive attractions of mass mobilisation. Furthermore, the paper looks at the ways in which the attempt to analyse the often surprisingly complicated negotiations between rulers and ruled under dictatorship puts into question the old, to some extent ‘Cold War’, idea of total breach between dictatorship and what is often now seen as default democracy, suggesting possible continuities along the course of the twentieth century and extending to the present.  

Simone Duranti  
**Instruments of Propaganda? The Fascist GUF (Gruppi Universitari Fascisti) and the limits of Totalitarianism**  
The paper examines the role of the university students of the fascist GUF organization (Gruppi Universitari Fascisti) and their use as instruments of propaganda. The GUF were a branch of the PNF (they were the most heavily financed of all the capillary organizations) and were central to the mobilization strategy of the regime. GUF students – an elite - operated within the universities among the other students and, more interestingly, outside the universities among the general population. In particular, during the 1930s, the gufini worked along three lines: campaigning for the 'morality' of fascism (against corruption, nepotism, etc); promoting the formation of a militarized society (proclaiming the myth of personal sacrifice); and explaining the meaning of corporatism to workers involved in the process of industrial reorganization. This last aspect is especially important in determining the contacts between the regime and the working class – contacts that illustrate not only the ways in which an elite of the second generation envisaged the future of fascism but also, because of the negative reaction of the regime, the limits imposed on student freedom to elaborate that future. The paper concentrates on these themes and illustrates both the terms on which the gufini approached the working class and the effects of their efforts at proselytization.  

Kate Ferris  
**Outside the State? The Politics of Everyday Life in Fascist Italy**  
This paper examines the value of taking an approach to the study of Italian fascism informed by the analytical tools associated with Alltagsgeschichte, initially pioneered in Germany in the 1980s by the likes of Alf Lüdtke and Detlev Peukert, and further developed by Sheila Fitzpatrick in the field of Soviet history and with microhistory. In so doing, it understands the approach as one possible response to the enduring scholarly conundrum of a dictatorship that proclaimed itself totalitarian and sought to affect a totalising transformation of society and of an ‘actually-existing’ fascist regime which remained at best ‘imperfectly’ totalitarian and at worst, in the words of Hannah Arendt, “just an ordinary nationalist dictatorship”. Using empirical examples from my own research into Everyday Life in Fascist Venice (Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), and the shared ideas of my co-editors (Josh Arthurs and Michael Ebner) in a forthcoming collection of the same title as this paper (under contract with Palgrave Macmillan), the paper will explore some of the analytical sites of the everyday experience of fascism including personal relationships, social interactions and community bonds, to illustrate what the study of everyday actions, choices and behaviours can tell us about the “microphysics” of power under a repressive and interventionist regime.  

Marcello Flores  
**The Legacies of Fascism: Continuities and Ruptures**  
The aim of this paper is to reflect on the fascism’s legacy and on how the Italian Republic has tried to come to terms with the country’s Fascist past. This is not only an engaging and particularly topical subject, but it is also an opportunity to dwell on the research trajectory and scholarship of a whole generation of historians, and beyond that as well. In this paper, then, I critically address the new historiography pioneered by Guido Quazza’s work (1972) and, most importantly, the work done by Claudio Pavone in his La continuità dello Stato. Istituzioni e uomini (1974). The paper will also feature references to Renzo De Felice’s biography of Mussolini and the ensuing controversy, to finish by mentioning the current gulf between the definite maturity achieved by Italian historiography, on the one hand, and the growing lack of attention addressed to the forms by means of which the narrative of fascism has been conveyed via the media and in public opinion, on the other.
Alice Gussoni

GAETANO SALVEMINI AND THE ANTI-FASCIST STRUGGLE FROM ABROAD

Although Salvemini’s biography and intellectual production has been explored by a number of publication, not enough importance has been given so far to his British exile, still considered as a period of transition until he moved to the US in 1934. In reality, it is vital to assess the peculiarities of his personal experience in order to understand the reasons that moved Salvemini to carry on the anti-fascist struggle from abroad, precisely from Britain.

This analysis of Salvemini’s experience – which aims to follow the people’s history approach - will take into account papers held both in British and Italian Archives, in order to demonstrate that the peculiarity his political activity must be retraced in the identification of the British milieu as the headquarter of an anti-fascist campaign which aimed not to arouse indignation amongst Italians abroad, but mainly to make Britons despise fascism and therefore put pressure on the dictatorship from Britain. As a demonstration of this assertion, some episodes of Salvemini’s anti-fascist activity and personal history will be taken into account and explained by paying attention to the results they obtained in Italy thanks to the support he had gained in Britain. In fact, Salvemini was aware that his anti-fascist voice could have been heard and understood in Italy only if supported by the British intelligentsia and public opinion, of which Mussolini greatly stood in awe of. As an example of this, even one of the most famous episode of Salvemini’s life, the Non Mollare Trial in 1925 and its consequences, will be reinterpreted thanks to documents found both in British and Italian archives, which demonstrate that the British public opinion had a leading role in making Mussolini sparing Salvemini’s life and granting him freedom.

alice.gussoni@pmb.ox.ac.uk

Gioachino Lanotte

MUSSOLINI AND HIS ORCHESTRA: SONGS AND RADIO BETWEEN PROPAGANDA AND CENSORSHIP

A large number of studies have already investigated the use of songs and radio programs as political tool during the fascist regime in Italy. Compared with those analysis this paper is characterized by two peculiarities:

1) an historiographical use of entertainment items not simply as a sterile “reflecting theory”, but interrogating them as outright documents, looking for stratified links that lead from the “text” to the historical context and take back the mental landscape of authors and users in that age.

2) a view focused more on the impact and the outcomes of propaganda/censorship in entertainment section rather than on the strategies and the organization modalities implemented by Italian Fascism.

In particular, this paper looks at another extremely interesting question: over and above the pressures of a State that “longed” to be totalitarian, to what extent Italians perceived those manoeuvres as the plans of a regime willing to use all means in order to impose conformance? To what extent did they perceive such manipulation of leisure time’s elements as a limitation of freedom itself? To what extent did they see the political attempt at defining cultural paradigms through the emotional involvement as a sneaky operation of “social engineering”? After all, did Italians feel the weight of the dictatorship or were they guilty of lightening it with their acquiescence?

Gioachino.Lanotte@unicatt.it

Charles Leavitt

LA FAVOLA DELL’ANNO ZER0’ IN POST-FASCIST ITALY

In the celebrated preface to the 1964 re-publication of Il sentiero dei nidi di ragno, Italo Calvino sought to convey to a new generation of readers the tremendous sense of joy that he and his contemporaries had felt at the end of the Second World War: “quello di cui ci sentivamo depositari,” he explained, “era un senso della vita come qualcosa che può ricominciare da zero.” Not long after Calvino offered this historical testimony, however, the critical tide would shift, leading to growing scepticism among both historians and cultural critics regarding the sense of post-war renewal that Calvino remembered. By 1968—just four years after the publication of Calvino’s preface—Giorgio Bärberi Squarotti could with confidence insist on the “segno di una continuità storico-sociologica (e anche culturale) che il dopoguerra offre rispetto agli anni trenta.” By now, nearly fifty years later, this sense of post-war and post-Fascist continuity has become a critical commonplace.

In my paper I will argue that the case for continuity has been significantly overstated. Attempts to overturn what has been dubbed “la favola dell’anno zero”—the belief that everything would begin anew after Fascism’s defeat—have distorted reality no less than has the “favola” itself. The truth is that in the first decade after the war there was no “favola dell’anno zero.” Italian artists and intellectuals had a far more nuanced, sophisticated, and realistic understanding of their country’s post-war reconstruction. Rather than radical rupture and an entirely new beginning, they offered a compelling vision of gradual reform. Re-claiming that vision and rejecting the rigid opposition between radical renewal and total
continuity, my paper will make the case for a return to the supple standards of historical judgment articulated in Italy’s emphatic post-war social, cultural, and political discourse

Carl Levy
THE SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND POLITICAL HISTORY OF THE TERM ‘TOTALITARIANISM’ (THE ITALIAN DIMENSION): SOME REFLECTIONS ON A NEW PROJECT

The term totalitarismo was born in Italy to warn of the rise of Fascism but then was embraced by Mussolini and Giovanni Gentile to bolster the Regime and finally, after a complex odyssey during the Second World War, used in the context of Cold War social science to explain the parallels between the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany. Having been repulsed as a term of self-identification in Nazi Germany, totalitarianism made its appearance in the US in the *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences* (1934), and was used by C.H. Hayes (*Proceedings of American Philosophical Society*, 1940) and S. Neumann (*The Permanent Revolution*, 1942 and *Behemoth*, 1944). However, it is with the Cold War and the first proper attempts to theorize and historicize totalitarianism made by Hannah Arendt (*The origin of Totalitarianism*, 1951) and J. Friederich and Z.K. Brzezinski (*Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy*, 1956) that the social and political history of the terms begun. In this phase the Italian case and historical experience disappeared, encouraging a cultural and political interpretation of the Mussolini’s regime as mild and more humane than the Nazi or Soviet regimes. The term re-emerged in the Italian debate in the long phase culminating in the teaming up of the so-called ‘Second Republic’, from late 1970s to the 1990s firstly used by the new reformist Craxi’s PSI to undermine the appeal of Euro-communism and, then, utilized by ex-neo-Fascists to marginalized those still existent fringes who cherished the legacy and memory of Mussolini.

This paper will present the key-points and the main theoretical and historiographical questions of a research project focused on the social and political trajectory of the term ‘totalitarianism’ from its first appearance until the end of the Cold War. The project is anchored in the fields of legacies studies and transnational history, combining cultural and global intellectual history, and their refraction through 1) TV programmes and cinema (1950s-1960s, and 1980s), 2) unpublished correspondence between ‘third-way’ intellectuals, left liberals and libertarian socialists and the liberals and social scientists (including Bobbio, Silone, Tasca, Matteucci, Salvatorelli, Valiani to Arendt, Brzezinski, Kennan, MacCarthy, Koestler) and used of the early archives of the *Journal of Contemporary History*, Mosse’s papers and the letters of Renzo De Felice or interviews with his schools of followers.

Salvatore Lupo
IL FASCISMO E LA MAFIA


3- La mafia ha dipinto se stessa come antifascista. Mafia e Alleati. Uno sguardo retrospettivo. Leonardo Sciascia trae da una riflessione sull'operazione Mori la sua polemica contro i professionisti dell'antimafia. L'uso politico dell'antimafia: l'epurazione del Partito fascista e il caso del fedele Alfredo Cucco.

4- Anche la magistratura guarda all’indietro: la riscoperta della mafia come associazione. Antimafia di destra e antimafia di sinistra. Magistrature speciali e polizie segrete: l’Ispettorato interprovinciale di Ps. La mafia come società segreta nei documenti dell’Ispettorato. La confessione del dottor Allegra, medico e mafioso. Negli anni ’30 esisteva già Cosa nostra?

Hannah Malone
ARCHITECTURAL LEGACIES OF FASCISM

The proposed paper will examine how Italy has dealt with the physical remains of the fascist regime as a window onto Italian attitudes to the fascist past. The regime left an indelible mark on Italy’s cities in the form of major urban projects, individual buildings, plaques, monuments and street names. In effect, the survival of physical traces contrasts with the hazy memories of fascism that persist within the Italian collective consciousness. Conspicuous, yet mostly ignored, Italy’s fascist heritage is hidden in plain sight. However, from the early 2000s, buildings associated with the regime have sparked
a number of debates that now act as conduits for discussions about the survival of fascist mentalities in Italy’s political and cultural life. Although these debates present an opportunity to re-examine history, they are also symptomatic of a crisis in the Italian polity and, while efforts to preserve a fascist heritage might stem from an urge to acknowledge the past, they might also originate from right-wing politics and from attempts to neutralise fascism through the de-politicisation of history.

Whereas, traditionally, historians have analysed the impact of fascism on Italy’s political, economic and legal structures, recent work has focused on culture and individual experience. In line with new developments, there is an opportunity to explore the legacy of fascism through the spaces of everyday life. Media interest shows that the physical remnants of fascism are a flashpoint for tensions within Italian public discourse. In that respect, the paper will unite issues raised within recent historiography and within popular culture, and rather than focusing on history as crafted by historians, it will examine heritage as the re-interpretation of the past by society at large. It will investigate debates around the preservation, destruction and neglect of the architectural legacy of fascism in order to expose, through concrete examples, perceptions of the fascist past.

Rossella Merlino
REDEFINING MAFIA “CULTURE” BEYOND CULTURALISM: THE CASE OF COSA NOSTRA AND RELIGION

Throughout its history, the mafia has demonstrated an ability to combine continuity with innovation and to adapt to changing circumstances whilst maintaining a seemingly consistent set of cultural values and practices. Religion, in particular, may be viewed as a central component of mafia “culture”. Starting from the 1990s, the phenomenon of mafia religion has been approached from several different perspectives ranging from socio-anthropological and psychological studies, to specialised theological analyses. These approaches fit within a recent stream of mafia studies that acknowledges the corporative dimension of the mafia as well as the importance of its solid ideological framework, moving away from culturalist paradigms which dominated political and academic discourses on the mafia until the early 1980s. However, scientific studies of mafia religion have also highlighted the dynamic nature of this phenomenon, challenging views on mafia cultural codes and ritual activities as static, invariable sets of norms and practices; a view, which frequently recurs in contemporary academic analyses.

Using a case study approach, this paper examines the role of the religious dimension of Cosa Nostra in light of existing scholarly approaches to the study of mafia “culture”. It argues that discourses on the cultural dimension of the mafia need to be contextualized within wider contemporary debates on the constitutive role of culture in society, which largely emphasise the ‘causal and socially constitutive role of cultural processes and systems of signification’ (Steinmetz 1999). In particular, this analysis draws on Cultural Sociology to reinforce the concept of culture as a socially constructed practice, as a process and as a performance rather than a static system of rules and norms. Such an approach may help identify not only a line of continuity in the history of Cosa Nostra in relation to its cultural dimension, but also the extent to which this has evolved through time reflecting changes in the organisation at a structural level and at level of its leadership. Data for analysis include novel judicial papers, police reports and relevant secondary literature on the subject.

Giuliana Minghelli
HISTORY AND EMOTIONS IN FRANCO FORTINI’S I CANI DEL SINAI

Angelo Fortunato Formiggini, the innovative Modena publisher who jumped to his death from the Ghirlandina Tower to protest the Racial Laws of 1938, once observed: “Il fascismo è una gran bella cosa visto dall’alto, da sotto fa tutto un a effetto.” It seems that starting from the immediate post-war, and increasingly with the passage of time, Italians have been able to look at Fascism only from high above. Very few artists and intellectuals who lived “under” Fascism recounted the materiality of the experience and reflected on the long-term effects that “living below” for a long twenty years inscribed on the body of individuals, families and social groups across generations.

In this essay, I intend to explore the emotional unsaid that inhabits the memory of Fascism and how Fascism eroded the faculty to preserve and remember through a text rarely discussed: Franco Fortini’s I cani del Sinai, an embattled reflection on his Jewish origins and his life under Fascism. This memoir/pamphlet written in the aftermath of the 1967 Arab-Israeli war is the first sustained act of witnessing in Italy, after Primo Levi’s books. Fortini’s honest and desperate working through of his past, makes palpable the formidable difficulty, even at 40-year’s distance, even for a thinker, a poet and victim of Fascism’s violence and racist policies, to freely remember. Raw emotions disrupt the prose and critical reflection, viscerally raising the question: what is hindering the act of recollection?

In dialogue with the recent historiographical work of Giulia Albanese and Michael Ebner on violence and emotion, as well as the reflections of Giorgio Agamben and, more recently, Gabriella Turnaturi (Vergogna. Metamorfosi di un’emozione), I

hannaholiviamalone@gmail.com
r.merlino@bangor.ac.uk
intend to explore how the powerful emotion of shame corrodes the ethical function of the memory act, and how coercion and consent, the twin terms that have dominated the opposing sides of the historiographical debate on Fascism, are enmeshed elements of a logic of power shaping life “under” fascism as complicity and silence. I suggest that the failure of Italians to come to terms with the past is Fascism’s most insidious and defining legacy.

Samantha Owen
CELEBRATING UNITY: DANIELO DOLCI, CLIENTALISM, WASTE AND TRANSNATIONAL CONVERSATIONS

In 1961 one hundred years of Italian Unification was commemorated in Italy and abroad. Philadelphia’s Festival of Italy celebrated the cultural richness and closeness of Italy and was supported by local and Italian industry and businesses, the Italian American community, the local authorities and Italian and Regional Governments. The Sicilian Pavilion was the star exhibit in the Festival and it related a success story of Sicilian regional and industrial development and displayed goods ready for trade and export.

However not all agreed with the narrative and to protest they asked the Sicily-based peace activist Danilo Dolci to give a talk. Dolci had been invited to the U.S. by the Friends of Dolci committee, among them Aldous Huxley and Edward Banfield. At the Sicilian Pavilion Dolci argued that the clientalist-mafia politics that besieged Sicily “wasted” people and resources and stunted development. Dolci characterized clientalism as an immutable Sicilian trait that with careful (external) guidance and training could be redirected productively. Dolci’s talk outraged some Italian and Italian American leaders and recommended him to others: the U.S. Peace Corps director asked to meet. These essentialist views underpinned the representation Dolci made to the Antimafia Commission in 1965, and he went knowing he had external support.

The story of the Festival and Dolci, and of the struggle to control the projected image of Sicily and Sicilians, illuminates how important the identification of what mafia is and means is for Sicilians and Italians at home and abroad. An analysis of who engaged with Dolci and how begins to untangle an emerging transnational conversation in the 1960s over the mafia and Italian/Sicilian character as it moved between different interest groups – Italian-Americans, businesspersons, U.S. and Italian politicians, Sicilian Regional Government, development experts, Italian Americans, Sicilians, activists and academics.

Luca Palermo
ETICA ED ESTETICA: LA STREET ART PER LA RIGENERAZIONE DI UNA VILLA CONFISCATA ALLA CAMORRA. UN CASO DI STUDIO ITALIANO

Casapesenna è una piccola città in provincia di Napoli ubicata nella tristemente nota Terra dei fuochi, terra di Camorra e di totale assenza di Stato e di legge. Al fine di rispondere al degrado con la bellezza e all’illegalità con il colore, la Seconda Università degli Studi di Napoli ha focalizzato la sua attenzione sulla rigenerazione di una grande villa confiscata alla Camorra situata al centro della città; lo ha fatto usando l’arte contemporanea, in particolar modo la street art, e la sua capacità di avvicinare e coinvolgere diversi tipi di pubblici attivando, in tal modo, non solo processi culturali, ma anche sociali (senso di appartenenza e identità storica) ed economici (sviluppo territoriale): dal degrado alla bellezza, dall’illegalità alla legalità.

I due interventi site-specific realizzati da due street artist italiani, Giò Pistone ed Alberonero, e curati da Luca Palermo, hanno trasformato l’aspetto della villa abbrandando, metaforicamente, gli alti muri perimetrali costruiti dai boss della camorra per controllare il territorio, e trasmettendo ai cittadini un messaggio di colore e speranza. Allo stesso modo, i cittadini si sono riappropriati di questo spazio, attivando processi virtuosi di partecipazione ed inclusione sociale.

Prima e dopo la Camorra: il risultato è stato incredibile.

Dario Pasquini
LONGING FOR PURITY. FASCISM AND NAZISM IN ITALIAN AND GERMAN SATIRICAL PRESS (1943-1963)

I propose to present the outcomes of my PhD research regarding the thematicization of Fascism and of Nazism in the Italian and German satirical press, from 1943 to 1963. On this topic I have recently published a book in Italian: Ansia di purezza. Il fascismo e il nazismo nella stampa satirica italiana e tedesca (1943-1963), Rome, Viella, 2014.

Comparative studies of these two countries in relation to the legacies of Fascism and Nazism are rare, and what is more they typically rely on secondary sources. My research relies on a systematic investigation of verbal and visual contributions from Italian and West- and East-German satirical periodicals. Most of these periodicals were published after
the Liberation of Italy and Germany. However I also analyzed contributions published under the Badoglio-Governement in the Summer 1943.

My main argument is that in the early postwar period, following the attempts of the Allies and of the antifascist or anti-Nazi forces to stimulate a broad political and moral condemnation of Fascism and Nazism, a significant part of the Italian and German public approached the two regimes as a source of anxiety and potential contamination. Such an approach provoked both in Italy and Germany reactions aimed to deny the contaminating character of Fascism and Nazism.

The discourse about Fascism and/or Nazism in the satirical press -and the dynamic between those who represented the two regimes as impure and those who claimed that impurity had been elsewhere- had different developments in the three different contexts considered. In Italy, during the years after 1948 an ‘internalization’ of Fascism, consisting in images banalizing or praising the regime, dominated the satirical press. In East Germany Nazism was ‘externalised’ and ‘demonised’ through images thematizing the Nazi concentration camps and depicting the FRG as a new form of Nazism. In West Germany sources thematizing Nazism’s component of ‘horror’ helped providing a self-critical, even if often contradictory, ‘internalization’ of Nazism, in which the regime’s demonisation played a crucial role.

Manoela Patti
IL FASCISMO, L’ANTIMAFIA E LA SELEZIONE DELLA CLASSE DIRIGENTE LOCALE. IL CASO PALERMITANO

Negli ultimi decenni, gli studi sul rapporto tra mafia e fascismo in Sicilia si sono arricchiti di numerosi contributi che, inserendosi in un filone di studi aperto principalmente da Salvatore Lupo alla fine degli anni ottanta, hanno riletto alla luce di nuovi scavi archivistici l’interpretazione di Duggan della campagna antimafia del prefetto Mori. Le ricerche più recenti, oltre a rilevare la compresenza nell’antimafia fascista di un aspetto repressivo del fenomeno mafioso, colpito nella sua dimensione criminale-associativa, e di un aspetto simbolico e politico, hanno infatti dimostrato l’esistenza di una “seconda” campagna antimafia, avviata in sordina negli anni trenta per colpire gruppi e cosche ancora attivi dopo la repressione guidata da Cesare Mori.

In questo quadro, è possibile proporre anche l’ipotesi di una riletura del rapporto tra regime e ceto dirigente locale. La questione è stata parzialmente posta da Matteo Di Figlia in alcuni recenti lavori sulla formazione della classe dirigente fascista nella provincia di Palermo. Il saggio che qui si propone vuole però soffermarsi più specificamente sul problema del rapporto tra amministratori fascisti e mafia, e quindi sull’effettivo ruolo giocato dall’antimafia del regime nelle scelte operate dai prefetti di Palermo in relazione alla selezione della classe dirigente tra anni venti e trenta; in particolare quella podestarile. Si analizzerà dunque, anche attraverso analisi prosopografiche, quanto le sentenze sulle associazioni mafiose o il giudizio espresso dalle forze di polizia contorno (o meno) come effettivo elemento di limitazione del potere di famiglie e gruppi reputati contigui o interni alla criminalità mafiosa.

Si proverà così ad indagare la questione del rapporto tra mafia ed establishment locale all’interno della più ampia riflessione sul rapporto tra mafia e fascismo negli anni trenta, problema aperto negli ultimi anni a partire dal tema della repressione operata in Sicilia dall’Ispettorato di P.S. nella seconda metà degli anni trenta.

Ugo Pavan della Torre
THE ITALIAN NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF DISABLED SERVICEMEN (ANMIG) AND FASCISM

ANMIG was established in 1917. This association wanted to become the caretaker of the memory of the war and, after the end of the war, wanted to have a role in the organization of the veterans and in the management of the government of Italy. At the beginning, the relationship with the fascist movement was not cordial, as the association did not like the aggressive methods of the fascist. And fascist movement was more attracted by Arditi rather than an association like ANMIG. In 1922 ANMIG tried to organize the return of Gabriele D’Annunzio in the Italian politics, during a commemoration of the 4th November. But in October 1922 Mussolini took the power and AMIG was in a delicate situation.

Mussolini needed the veterans and the disabled ex-servicemen to legitimate his new government, so he did not use a hostile behavior. On the contrary he started to work on the reform of the war pensions. So ANMIG turned its ideas and started to be agree with the first Mussolini Government. Not yet with the fascist movement. During the years, ANMIG grew, and had a closer relationship both with the government and with the regime. A relationship that would have not endured after 8th September: ANMIG was divided into two parts, one followed Mussolini at Salò, the other one collaborated with the Resistance. In 1946 with the Congress of Venice, ANMIG returned to a democratic life and started to work for the Republican values. In this paper, I will use the sources of the Association, in particular the Acts of the Central Committee and the numbers of Il Bollettino, the Association’s magazine.
Amber Phillips  
**NDRANGHETA IN THE NEWS: CONTRASTING NATIONAL AND REGIONAL PRESS REPRESENTATIONS OF THE 1969 MONTALTO SUMMIT**

Consistent with the ‘ndrangheta’s status as Italy’s least-studied mafia, little research has thus far been dedicated specifically to press representations of the organisation. Furthermore, while historians and sociologists writing about the ‘ndrangheta’s past frequently quote from newspaper articles, these texts are rarely considered in context or subjected to close analysis. Indeed, journalism tends to be approached as a single genre, with scant attention paid to the distinction between a *cronaca* article and a *terza pagina* opinion piece; this carries the risk of highly subjective content being interpreted as historical fact.

This paper will present a comparative analysis of the representation of a pivotal event in the ‘ndrangheta’s history – the 1969 ‘Montalto summit’ – in *La Stampa* and *La Gazzetta del Sud*, deploying framing theory, and informed by cultural, social, and political context, as well as paying close attention to the crucial element of genre. A recurring observation made by ‘ndrangheta scholars is the tendency of the Calabrian regional press to exhibit a certain defensiveness in its reporting of mafia-related stories, in response to perceived prejudice in national newspapers. However, precious few concrete examples have so far been offered to substantiate such claims, nor have explicit parallels been drawn with the similar phenomenon of *sicilianismo*. Using the case study of the Montalto summit, I will investigate the extent to which observations of this ‘calabresismo’ can be confirmed or challenged by detailed, contextualised textual analysis. Further, I will consider the capacity of journalistic texts to both reflect and influence perceptions of organised crime at a regional and national level. This includes their potential to impact academic perceptions of the organisation’s history decades after they were produced.

Giuliana Pieri  
**FASCIST ART: A DISPUTED LEGACY**

In 1986, Mondadori’s multi-volume popular *Storia dell’arte italiana*, in the chapter dedicated to Italian Art under fascism, stated in peremptory fashion: ‘we cannot talk of Fascist art’. After the initial iconoclasm, the physical concealment of images of Mussolini was accompanied by a wider wave of critical oblivion. Although specialist publications in the 1960s and 1970s made tentative steps in the reassessment of the visual culture of the Fascist regime, a number of important volumes on the history of Italian art, published in Italy in the 1980s and 1990s and aimed at both specialists and the general public, spun a common narrative around Italian art between the wars.

Unsurprisingly, there was an attempt to erase the links between individual artists and the regime, as well as a more general portrayal of Italian artists, in the 1920s and 1930s, as detached from political engagement and preoccupations. The way in which a number of celebrated art historians have glossed over the links between Fascism and the arts is revealing of deeply set critical prejudice. In this paper the art historical discourse surrounding Fascism and the arts, and especially the debate around the phenomenon of fascist art, will be in focus. My aim is to track the major protagonists of this historiographical debate and to see what traces remain of this difficult legacy in contemporary views on the history of Italian modern art.

Beatrice Sica  
**A BATTLE OF IMAGES IN POSTWAR ITALY: UNSEATED KNIGHTS AS CHAMPIONS OF ANTI-FASCISM**

This paper deals with the myth and representations of Mussolini on horseback. It looks first at how this myth was constructed in the interwar period, then at how it was deconstructed after WWII. In the interwar period, the Fascist propaganda produced countless images of Mussolini, many of which portrayed him riding or standing on a horse. The image of the Fascist leader on horseback was particularly powerful in spreading his myth, because it followed artistic traditions that dated back to classical antiquity and the Renaissance.

Indeed, the equestrian statues of Roman emperors and the paintings of the Quattrocento and Cinquecento condottieri provided established models to promote Italy’s Duce in an eternal light. Artists, illustrators, photographers, and camera men used classical and Renaissance visual codes entrenched in the Italians’ minds to portray Mussolini on horseback and reinforce the Fascist propaganda. Paintings, statues, murals, newsreels, newspapers, magazines, artworks, postcards, stamps, school textbooks and workbooks all showed the Duce on his horse.

After WWII, the icon of Mussolini-knight was challenged in various ways. Italians born in the 1920s and early 1930s, grown-up and schooled under the Fascist rule, could remember very well the image of the Duce on horseback. In the first Republican years, anti-Fascist writers and artists reworked on this iconic image to get rid of the Fascist values and myths. Even when they made no references to Mussolini and his regime, it is possible to read their representations of men on
horses as an implicit revolt towards the Duce condottiero. Unseated, mutilated, defeated, and even non-existent, to use Calvino’s words, cavalrymen and knights in the Italian culture of the 1950s and 1960s can be seen an expression of anti-fascist values.

b.sica@ucl.ac.uk

Margherita Sulas

LA PERSISTENZA DEL MITO MUSSOLINIANO NELLA DESTRA POSTFASCISTA ITALIANA NEGLI ANNI DEL CENTRISMO

Nel dicembre del 1946, grazie all’amnistia voluta dal Guardasigilli Palmiro Togliatti, attraverso la quale si imboccava la via della concordia nazionale e della pacificazione, la destra nostalgica e fascista di Salò si ritrovò riorganizzata in un partito: il Movimento Sociale Italiano. Un nuovo partito in cui il mito dei 600 giorni di Salò assume un peso rilevante sulla costruzione del patrimonio simbolico identitario del nuovo soggetto politico e la figura del Duce viene fatta oggetto di culto. Scopo del paper è quello di indagare la forza del richiamo al mito mussoliniano nella destra postfascista dalla nascita dell’MSI agli anni del centrismo attraverso lo studio dei principali giornali e periodici del partito utilizzati dai militanti nell’azione politica e propagandistica.

margherita@unica.it