Italia contemporanea Yearbook 2021

Istituto nazionale Ferruccio Parri

FrancoAngeli

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Foreword

Enrica Asquer, Alessio Gagliardi, Alessandra Gissi, Toni Rovatti

The second edition of our English-language "Yearbook", which we present here, consolidates the project launched over a year ago by the journal *Italia contemporanea* with the support of the Istituto Nazionale Ferruccio Parri and the publisher FrancoAngeli. With this new edition, the journal renews the practice of translating into English a selection of research articles and shorter discussion articles that the journal has published, in Italian, in the previous year. This initiative continues to represent a valuable form of transnational dissemination of the research and the historiographical and methodological debates that usually appear in the pages of *Italia contemporanea*. Indeed, the journal hopes to continue to make an innovative contribution to the project of making Italian historiography more competitive by overcoming the scarce global knowledge of its language and encouraging intellectual exchange with scholars of Italian history based abroad.

Containing five research articles and four shorter discussion articles, the Yearbook 2021 is the result of a careful selection of contributions that have already been published in the journal's open access section. The selected texts shed light on a variety of themes, issues, and historiographical and methodological approaches. Some have been chosen for their capacity to enhance a comparative, transnational or global reading of Italian history, others because they represent the lines of research and original approaches that the journal intends to promote: the history of labour and industry; racism as an ideological, scientific and social construction; the Second World War and the management of its dramatic legacy in the post-war period; the development of social policies in Republican Italy and the intersection of normative-legislative dimensions, intellectual and political debates, and socio-cultural dynamics; the many faces and historical cycles of the Resistance and anti-fascism as a reference point (to be redefined) for new political movements in the second half of the twentieth century; social history and the methodological issues that it continues to raise, including the intertwining of micro and macro perspectives and "games of scale".

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It should be noted that editing a journal that proudly continues to call itself "Italia contemporanea" constantly confronts us with the problem of how to reconcile national, regional and local scales, offering a dynamic overview capable of locating themes and issues in the most appropriate contexts and restoring their interconnections — or even their deviations and specificities — in comparison to the global framework. Our authors visibly share this problematic perspective, highlighting the force of the global turn but also the growing need not to neglect the materiality of the contexts in which social actors move.

Furthermore, by linguistically enhancing — so to speak — our open access section, thus making it even more capable of dialoguing with the world, we once again set ourselves the task of communicating and disseminating historical research that may transcend purely academic concerns and foster opportunities for discussion and critical awareness of the present time and the context in which we, as scholars, daily operate. In sum, another reason for us to continue talking about "Italia contemporanea".

An "inferior class of white aliens". Italians and the labour movement in nineteenth- and twentieth-century San Francisco*

Tommaso Caiazza**

This article examines the relationship between Italian immigrants and the labour movement in early twentieth-century San Francisco. It studies the Italians' integration process through the lens of race by focusing on the racist policies adopted by labour unions, which only admitted "whites" and excluded Asian immigrants. Drawing on a wide variety of sources (the labour press, trade unions' records, employment data), I will reveal how Italians, although discriminated against and judged as racially inferior, were nonetheless recognised as "white" and therefore assimilated into the labour movement. I argue that this was made possible by the early development of a common "Caucasian" identity among European groups, modelled against Asian immigration, which reduced the tensions that prevailed elsewhere in the United States, namely between the "old stock" and the "new immigrants", among whom many Italians.
Key words: Italian migration to the United States, Whiteness, Racism, Labour history

Are Italians white? The Pacific perspective

In 1911, a trade unionist who was assisting grocery clerks in San Francisco made a scathing attack on Italian immigrants. Writing in the pages of the *San Francisco Call,* he accused them of introducing the lowermost living and working conditions and hence putting a burden on the trade union movement:

> We are having considerable trouble in our work on account of an inferior class of white aliens, who have been coming to this country in great numbers lately, and are engaging in the grocery, fruit and candy business, underselling other stores and refusing to comply with union conditions […] From what I have seen of them in various parts of the city, I have come to the conclusion that they are worse than the Orientals. They are uncleanly, live miserably and pay those who work for them starvation wages. In settling here they are actuated by the same motive that actuates the Chinese, that is, money gathering to send to the land of their birth. Their condition and manner of doing business will be brought to the attention of the San Francisco Labor Council with a view to obtain a remedy for the evil they are creating.[1]

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[1] *Aliens retard label movement*, "San Francisco Call", 12 January 1911, p. 10.

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The expression "inferior class of white aliens" aptly summarises the attitude of the California labour movement to Italian immigrants. Although they were considered "inferior" from a racial perspective, up to the point of being compared to the "oriental" Chinese, the Italians remained "white" and hence a group that had to be included, as demonstrated by the attempt to insert them in the Grocery Clerks' Union of San Francisco.[2] This article describes what it meant for the California-based Italians to find themselves in the condition of "inferior white" people in terms of their relationship with the working class and their integration into the job market.

In recent historiography of immigration to the United States, scholars have raised questions about the racial experience of the "new immigrants", as the Italian, Greek, Hungarian, Polish and other groups from Southern and Eastern Europe were called in contrast to earlier migrants from Northern Europe.[3] The problem of racism against immigrants, which previous studies have addressed,[4] has thus been re-examined to understand the historical process behind the formation of "whiteness", understood both as a "category" that came to include the European migration flows and as an "identity" that the migrants discovered overseas.[5] The theoretical assumption is that the white race, far from being a natural entity, is a social and ideological construction. We can therefore reconstruct its genesis and evolution also with regard to the mass immigration from the Old Continent, which enabled new groups to enter the dimension of whiteness, diversifying it yet absorbing its main feature: racism against "non-whites".[6]

The arrival of Southern and Eastern European immigrants in the United States between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was a crucial step in the development of whiteness. Racial anthropology reached its peak when it contaminated American society with its pseudo-scientific theories and taxonomies. The "new immigrants", even if legally "white", were considered members of different races: Slavic, Iberian, Jewish and so on. The Italians were divided into two racial groups: the Alpine, for the small group of immigrants coming from regions not bordered by the sea; and the Mediterranean, for the bulk of

[2] On the union campaign, see Robert E.L. Knight, *Industrial relations in the San Francisco Bay Area, 1900-1918*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1960, p. 255.

[3] Desmond King, *Making Americans. Immigration, race, and the origins of the diverse democracy*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 2000, p. 50.

[4] John Higham, *Strangers in the land. Patterns of American nativism*, New Brunswick, Rutgers University Press,1955; Salvatore J. LaGumina, *Wop: a documentary history of anti-Italian discrimination in the United States*, San Francisco, Straight Arrow Books, 1973.

[5] David R. Roediger, *Colored white: transcending the racial past*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 2002, p. 22.

[6] Peter Kolchin, *Whiteness Studies. The new history of race in America*, "Journal of American History", 2002, n. 1, pp. 154-173. With regard to Italian immigration: Stefano Luconi, *Whiteness and ethnicity in Italian-American historiography*, in Jerome Krase (ed.), *The status of interpretation in Italian American studies*, Stony Brook, Forum Italicum, 2011, p. 146.

flows from the other areas of the peninsula.[7] This distinction was taken from the Lombrosian school, which theorised the racial "otherness" of southerners. However, its teachings were received and elaborated in different ways across the Atlantic.

In Italy, the theme of "whiteness" was practically absent from the discourse on race, which was still structured around historical-deterministic terminology rather than a strictly biological one.[8] The inferiority of Italians from the South was demonstrated not through the colour of their skin but through their atavistic belonging to a decayed and degenerate, Mediterranean race/civilisation. In the United States, instead, skin colour was central to the discourse on race and linked to the theme of "purity". The concept of the Mediterranean race was, in fact, used to determine the Italians' inferiority in view of their dark complexion, which raised suspicions that they were mixed with African blood.[9] Through the double binary of race and colour, a hierarchy within the European peoples was established that placed the Italians among white people but at the same time also questioned the possibility of their assimilation into the superior Teutonic, Anglo-Saxon or Nordic stock that formed the nation's roots.[10]

There is an ongoing debate among scholars on how to interpret the racial status of the "new immigrants" and grasp the meaning of the expression "inferior class of white aliens" that was applied to Italians in California, I will focus on two interpretations that have emerged in this debate: the concept of "inbetween people", advanced in particular by David Roediger; and Thomas Guglielmo's "white on arrival" thesis.[11] For Roediger, the "new immigrants" were only recognised as "white" over time and they learned to feel "white" by gradually developing a racist awareness of being different from the African-Americans who were marginalised along with them. From Roediger's point of view, the "new immigrants" became "white" because they gradually emerged

[7] William Ripley, *The races of Europe. A sociological study*, New York, D. Appleton and Company, 1899 and Madison Grant, *The passing of the Great Race. The racial basis of European History*, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1916.

[8] See Gaia Giuliani, Cristina Lombardi-Diop, *Bianco e nero. Storia dell'identità razziale degli italiani*, Florence, Le Monnier, 2013, chapter 1.

[9] On the re-elaboration of Cesare Lombroso's theory in the United States, see Peter R. D'Agostino, *Craniums, criminals, and the "cursed race": Italian anthropology in U.S. racial thought*, "Comparative Studies in Society and History", 2002, n. 2, pp. 319-343; Bénédicte Deschamps, *Le Racisme anti-italien aux États-Unis (1880-1940)*, in Michel Prum (ed.), *Exclure au nom de la race (États-Unis, Irlande, Grande-Bretagne)*, Paris, Syllepse, 2000, p. 59.

[10] Matthew F. Jacobson, *Whiteness of a different color: European immigrants and the alchemy of race*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1998; Nell I. Painter, *The history of the white people*, New York, W.W. Norton & Co., 2010.

[11] David R. Roediger, *Working toward whiteness. How America's immigrants became white*, New York, Basic Books, 2005; James R. Barrett, David R. Roediger, *Inbetween peoples: race, nationality and the 'New Immigrant' working class*, "Journal of American Ethnic History", 1997, n. 3, pp. 3-44; Thomas A. Guglielmo, *White on arrival. Italians, race, color, and power in Chicago, 1890-1945*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2003.

from a condition of racial ambiguity within which they understood the tragic value of whiteness in their adopted homeland. Conversely, Guglielmo argues that whiteness was not something the "new immigrants" had to achieve but a legal and social status granted to them upon arrival, of which they were well aware. In his opinion, the Italians — despite being discriminated against — were always situated within the system of privileges and advantages that distinguished the condition of "being white" from that of belonging to minorities of colour.

Although they reach opposite conclusions, Roediger and Guglielmo approach the issue of whiteness from a similar, diachronic perspective: both seek to understand when these groups can be said to have gained the position of "white" people in the American racial structure — whether immediately or gradually. However, by focusing on the temporal aspect, they offer uniform answers for the entire landscape of the United States that fail to take into account the specific way in which "whiteness" took shape on the Pacific Coast, with its unique context of "race relations" characterised by the presence of Mexican and, above all, Asian immigrants.[12] In the Pacific States, the most powerful racial dichotomy was not the usual white-black dichotomy, but the white-Asian one. As Erika Lee observed, in the Pacific Coast states, "immigration and whiteness were defined most clearly in opposition to Asian-ness or 'yellowness'".[13] This fundamental difference highlights the importance of the spatial aspect in explaining the racial status of the "new immigrants", namely through a diachronic perspective that reveals where their whiteness was accepted or rejected most.

In this article, I will examine the "whiteness" of the Italians in the context of employment. The labour movement in the United States forged its identity in terms not only of class but also of race, as will become evident from its discriminatory discourses and practices. In a society marked by black slavery in the southern part of the country, workers embraced "whiteness" as a symbol of their dependent-but-free, non-slave labour, degrading "non-whiteness" to a synonym for servility and threat.[14] As various scholars have observed, "whiteness" in the United States took on a social and political meaning, more than a biological one. For instance, Matthew Jacobson stated that whiteness was tanta-

[12] Tomás Almaguer, *Racial fault lines. The historical origins of white supremacy in California*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1994.

[13] Erika Lee, *The Chinese exclusion example: race, immigration, and American gatekeeping, 1882-1924*, "Journal of American Ethnic History", 2002, n. 3, pp. 36-62, here p. 43, republished in the more recent monograph, *At America's gates. Chinese immigration during the exclusion era, 1882-1943*, Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2004, p. 31; on the "white-Asian" dichotomy, see also Barbara Berglund, *Making San Francisco American. Cultural frontiers in the urban West, 1846-1906*, Lawrence, University of Kansas Press, 2007, p. 98.

[14] David R. Roediger, *The wages of whiteness. Race and the making of the American working class*, New York, Verso, 1991.

mount to "fitness for self-government" and citizenship.[15] Put differently, within the working class, whiteness meant being suitable to the "American standard of living" of the (male) worker who was organised in a union against the threat of female and "non-white", servile labour.[16] This is one of the meanings of "whiteness" that I will adopt in this article.

Nevertheless, white identity also had a more properly biological meaning in California, namely as a synonym for "Caucasian race", a second concept I will investigate here. In the local working-class context, the whiteness-Caucasian nexus evolved in a dynamic of opposition to Asian immigration, which was unique to the Pacific Coast.[17] Between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, African Americans were limited in number, as were the Mexicans, who resided in the agricultural areas of the south. At the methodological level, this means that Asian immigrants were the "non-white" benchmark against which the racial status of the "new" Italian immigrants was assessed. In other words, this article seeks to answer the question of Italian whiteness by comparing their condition to that of the Asians, contrary to existing literature (including the aforementioned studies by Roediger and Guglielmo) that compares the Italians with African Americans.[18] For this purpose, I will analyse press sources in which Italians were defined, and defined themselves, in racial terms. Drawing on archival documentation and statistical data, I will furthermore examine the Italian immigrants' positioning in the labour market and level of integration into trade unions. This will enable me to consider both components that, by intersecting with each other, determine the phenomenon of race: its "cultural representation" and "social structure".[19]

San Francisco, a union town

In the first two decades of the twentieth century, the labour movement of San Francisco went through a period of intense and uncommon development.[20]

[15] M. Jacobson, *Whiteness of a different color*, cit., p. 7. On the "social" meaning of whiteness, see T. Guglielmo, *White on arrival*, cit., p. 8.

[16] Lawrence Glickman, *Inventing the "American standard of living": gender, race, and working class identity, 1880-1925*, "Labor History", 1993, n. 2-3, pp. 221-235.

[17] Alexander Saxton, *The indispensable enemy. Labor and the anti-Chinese movement in California*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1995.

[18] Most studies centre around the industrial North and the Southern states, focusing on a comparison between Italians and African Americans. See the volume edited by Jennifer Guglielmo, Salvatore Salerno (eds.), *Gli italiani sono bianchi? Come l'America ha costruito la razza*, Milan, il Saggiatore, 2006.

[19] Michael Omi, Howard Winant, *Racial formation in the United States. From the 1960s to the 1990s*, New York, Routledge, 1994, p. 56.

[20] Lucile Eaves, *A history of California labor legislation*, Berkeley, The University Press, 1910; Ira B. Cross, *A history of the labor movement in California*, Berkeley, University of

Contrary to the precariousness of workers' organisations in other cities, the outbreak of a "union fever" — as a contemporary observer called it — boosted the number of unions in the Californian city, which jumped from a few to nearly a hundred units.[21] Not only the classic sectors of skilled labour — like the construction industry, controlled by the powerful Building Trades Council — were involved, but also categories that were not unionised elsewhere: shop assistants, grooms, butchers, bakers, waiters. Unionisation continued under the leadership of the Labor Council, the largest coordinating body of trade unions, which was affiliated with the national platform of the American Federation of Labor (hereafter AFL). Although the Labor Council shared the AFL's idea of "pure and simple unionism", which focused exclusively on labour and wage demands, it disagreed with the AFL's openness only to the unions of skilled workers so as to preserve their economic and social privileges through a strict selection of potential competitors. The Labor Council's new unionism was directed at all workers, including the unskilled labourers who were excluded from trade-unionist unions that were sceptical about their organisational possibilities.[22] Trade unions went through phases of advancement and standstill depending on the ability of their business counterpart to impose free bargaining of the workforce. The labour movement's tactic consisted in boycotting companies that resisted the closed shop system, which prescribed that only workers with union cards should be hired and the products had to be branded with the union label of the relevant category. This is how San Francisco gained a reputation as a closed-shop city.[23]

The causes behind the extraordinary development of the labour movement in San Francisco have been discussed elsewhere; historiography has identified various factors starting with the city's production system, which was centred on small and medium-sized companies. San Francisco's failure to develop into an industrial centre on a par with the major cities of the East and the Midwest meant that the unions were faced with a fragmented group of employers that was easier to isolate. For the purpose of this article, it is worth discussing the ethnic factors that scholarship has advanced. The first relates to the reduced influx of "new" immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe into the Pacific Coast, which would have protected the homogeneity of the local working class (of American and Northern European origin) and strengthened its internal cohesion. In other words, working-class structures in San Francisco — controlled by the northern "old stock", as elsewhere — would

California Press, 1935; Frederick L. Ryan, *Industrial relations in the San Francisco Building Trades*, Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1936; R. Knight, *Industrial relations*, cit.; Michael Kazin, *Barons of labor. The San Francisco Building Trades and union power in the Progressive Era*, Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 1989.

[21] Thomas W. Page, *The San Francisco labor movement in 1901*, "Political Science Quarterly", December 1902, n. 4, pp. 664-668, here p. 666.

[22] I. Cross, *A history of the labor movement in California*, cit., pp. 230-231.

[23] R. Knight, *Industrial relations*, cit., p. 97.

have remained more protected from the destabilising element of the "new immigrants", who were mostly of peasant origin and without union experiences, than in the East and the Midwest.[24] There is no doubt that the impact of the "new immigration" was not equal on both sides of the continent. In 1910, San Francisco's European immigrants were divided between 60 per cent of "old immigrants" — especially Irish and Germans — and 24 per cent of "new" ones. By contrast, in the cities on the East Coast (the landing place for ships from the Old Continent), the proportion was more balanced or even in favour of immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe.[25] Still, we must not underestimate the fact that even in San Francisco, between 1900 and 1910, the number of Italians dramatically increased from 7,000 to 17,000. Although lagging behind the eastern centres, San Francisco became the city with the largest ethnic group of Italians, with over 24,000 immigrants in just two decades.[26] It is therefore not possible to explain the cohesion of San Francisco's working class by relegating the "new immigrants" to an insignificant minority. Rather, we must ask ourselves how this cohesion was maintained despite the arrival of a large minority group composed of "new immigrants", namely the Italians. This is where a second ethnic factor may offer some explanations, and which — according to other scholars — contributed to the unusual strength of the labour movement in San Francisco: the mobilisation against Asian immigration, identified as a common enemy of all categories of wage earners, skilled and unskilled workers alike.[27] For the Californian working class, "anti-orientalism" was as much a component of its identity as it was an organisational tool. Suffice to think of the Workingmen's Party of California, which arose in San Francisco after the riot against Chinatown in 1877, with the aim of banning Chinese immigration.[28] The Chinese presence distanced San Francisco from the industrial centres on the Atlantic side in terms of the encounter with "non-whiteness". In 1880, the Chinese represented 10 per cent of the population in the Californian city, whereas in Philadelphia, African Americans amounted to less than four per cent; this was less than two per cent in New York.[29] However, the racism of the Californian working class was not merely a consequence of the strong presence of Chinese immigrants and their "downward" competition in the labour market. Even more important than economic factors

[24] L. Eaves, *A history of California labor legislation*, cit., pp. 3-4; R. Knight, *Industrial relations*, cit., p. 41; M. Kazin, *Barons of labor*, cit., p. 19.

[25] U.S. 1910 Census, *Population*, vol. 1, Washington, Government Printing Office, 1913, p. 825.

[26] Rose D. Scherini, *The Italian American community of San Francisco. A descriptive study*, New York, Arno Press, 1980, p. 3.

[27] L. Eaves, *A history of California labor legislation*, cit., p. 6.

[28] Neil L. Shumsky, *The evolution of political protest and the Workingmen's Party of California*, Columbus, Ohio State University, 1991, pp. 13-18.

[29] U.S. 1880 Census, *Population of the United States*, Washington, Government Printing Office, 1882, p. 382, p. 402, p. 406.

were ideological factors, linked to a racist mentality forged in opposition to "black slave labour", which American workers had brought to the Pacific Coast from other areas of the United States.[30]

In 1882, Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act, which blocked Chinese immigration. However, this did not end the obsessions of the Californian working class as the measure was only valid for ten years. Moreover, from the 1890s onwards, Japanese immigration began to flow to the West Coast and was immediately identified as a new target. The result was a permanent state of unrest that benefited the "new" European immigrants who, albeit as "inferior" people, were integrated as "white" workers into the local labour movement's eternal struggle against "oriental" immigration.

"New immigrants" and Asian workers in the *Labor Clarion*

In 1911, the *Labor Clarion* (the Labor Council's weekly magazine) declared a print run of 10,000 copies per edition.[31] The *Clarion* commented on political news, promoted the organisation of campaigns and published resolutions of individual trade unions and the wider California State Federation of Labor. At the end of 1905, it published a front-page article on the "immigration problem" that is useful to quote as it demonstrates how, on the Pacific Coast, the labour movement described racial differences. Within the hierarchy of priorities, the "new" European immigration was of secondary importance in comparison to the objective of an "absolute and irrevocable" exclusion of Asian immigration:

> in this estimate of the immigration problem, the Asiatic phase of that problem occupies first place among the demands for action. Whatever steps may be regarded as sufficient to deal with the exigencies of European immigration, nothing less than exclusion, absolute and irrevocable, will suffice to guard against the danger, not only to the American Government, but to the Western Civilization, arising from the invasion of the Mongol hordes.[32]

This remained the *Clarion*'s stance for the whole first decade of the twentieth century. Between 1911 and 1912, priority was still given to the exclusion "of all races not now entitled to the right of naturalization under existing laws" (i.e. Asian immigrants), whereas it supported the need to control the migration flows from the Old Continent, albeit without pronouncing any explicit criticism of the "new immigration": "[W]e do not attempt to draw any distinction between the peoples of Europe, North or South, east or west."[33]

[30] A. Saxton, *The indispensable enemy*, cit., p. 19 and pp. 22-25.

[31] *Newspaper Rate Book. Season 1912-1913*, St. Louis, Nelson Chesman & Co., n.d., p. 19.

[32] *The immigration problem*, "Labor Clarion", 22 December 1905, p. 1.

[33] *Resolution on the immigration question*, "Labor Clarion", 20 January 1911, p. 7; *Immigration conference*, "Labor Clarion", 23 February 1912, p. 4.

The *Clarion*'s programme was an unusual one in the national context of the labour movement, within which the "new immigrants" were not a threat of secondary importance as opposed to the Asian immigrants. Many studies have found similarities in the way the two groups were considered. Gwendolyn Mink highlighted the fact that the "old stock" of workers (i.e. Americans and Irish and German immigrants) forged its identity in opposition to the "new immigrants" through a racial discourse that extended to the latter the same accusations already made against the Chinese: accepting slave contracts, not being free by nature and living in degraded conditions.[34] Likewise, Donna Gabaccia argued that Italian and Chinese migrants went through a similar process of "racialisation", as demonstrated by the Italians' nickname, "Chinese of Europe"; considered inferior races carrying servile labour, both groups became the target of campaigns for immigration restrictions in defence of "free white labour".[35]

We could explain the *Clarion*'s obsession with Asian immigrants and its relative tolerance to the "new" immigrants from Europe as a consequence of the East Coast's greater exposure to Asian immigration as opposed to the flows coming from the Old Continent. However, the sources contradict this hypothesis. Without a doubt, the start of the new century on the Pacific Coast was marked by the boom of Japanese immigration: between 1900 and 1910, the number of Japanese migrants who arrived in California surged from 10,264 to 38,214. In an attempt to obstruct their entry into the trade union circles of San Francisco, in 1905 the Japanese and Korean Exclusion League — subsequently renamed the Asiatic Exclusion League — was established; its aim was to extend the restrictive measures already imposed on the Chinese to all Asian immigrants. Its founders made no distinction between Chinese, Japanese or Korean immigrants. As the *Clarion* wrote, it was not a matter of "nationality" but "race": all were "oriental" and, as such, "foreign to the spirit of America".[36] In 1907, Japanese mass immigration was halted when the Gentlemen's Agreement between the United States and Japan, which limited family reunifications, was signed. Anti-Asian agitation nonetheless continued in an attempt to obtain the conversion of the informal agreement into an exclusion law and, additionally, to counter the emerging immigration from India: "By the hundreds the natives of India are invading these shores […] and they are simply impossible as American citizens," the *Clarion* wrote in 1910.[37] In 1912, it made the

[34] Gwendolyn Mink, *Old labor and new immigrants in American political development. Union, party, and state, 1875-1920*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1986, pp. 97-112.

[35] Donna Gabaccia, *The "yellow peril" and the "Chinese of Europe": global perspectives on race and labor, 1815 1930*, in Jan Lucassen, Leo Lucassen (eds.), *Migration, migration history, history: old paradigms and new perspectives*, Bern, Peter Lang, 1997, p. 177.

[36] *Menace of the Jap*, "Labor Clarion", 24 February 1905, p. 9; *Question of race-not nationality*, "Labor Clarion", 9 August 1907, p. 9.

[37] *The Hindu invasion*, "Labor Clarion", 29 April 1910, p. 8.

following statement: "First in importance in any discussion of that subject is the necessity for an emphatic reaffirmation of the policy of Asiatic Exclusion […] this policy should be maintained and extended so as to apply to all Asiatics—Japanese, Koreans, Hindus, etc."[38]

Meanwhile, though, the "new" European migration to California was no less intense than Asian immigration. Between 1900 and 1910, the number of Italians — who made up the majority of "new immigrants" — rose from 22,777 to 63,615, exceeding the Japanese in both absolute numbers and growth rates. Along with them came Greek, Portuguese, Hungarian, Russian and other Slavic groups of "new immigrants". Asian immigration, instead, was mostly limited to Japanese people. The Chinese had been "excluded" ever since 1882, whereas the migration flows from India had only just begun. According to the 1910 census, while there were about 80,000 Asian immigrants (Japanese, Chinese, Indians) in California, the number of "new immigrants" amounted to nearly one hundred fifty thousand.[39] Hence, the *Clarion* based its priorities not on statistics but on racial stereotypes, mainly that which distinguished between European and Asian populations. There was no parallel between "new immigrants" and Asians, as emerges from the articles in which the two categories of immigrants were compared to highlight the "threat" posed by the latter:

> Of all classes of immigrants arriving in the United States the coolies from Japan seem to be most prone to loathsome and contagious disease. No less than 1 in 73 arriving in California are thus afflicted, and the full significance of this will be appreciated when it is understood that among the arrivals at New York, many of whom are from the dirtiest rookeries of Europe, only about one in 1,300 is deported for this cause.[40]

Likewise, the Asiatic Exclusion League used the comparison with the "new" European immigration to reinforce the thesis of the need for a total "exclusion" of Asian immigration, with the consequent downgrading of the former to a problem of mere "regulation":

> In its racial aspects Asiatic immigration differs radically from European immigration. In respect to the admission of Caucasians it is a question of regulation; in respect to Orientals it must be on of exclusion. The blood of America and Europe can meet, harmonize and flow in the same veins […] but an eternal law of nature has decreed that the white cannot assimilate the blood of another color without corrupting the very springs of civilization.[41]

[38] *Immigration conference*, "Labor Clarion", 23 February 1912, p. 4.
[39] U.S. 1910 Census, *Population*, cit., pp. 838-839.
[40] *Why Japanese and Koreans should be excluded*, "Labor Clarion", 12 May 1905, p. 8.
[41] *Proceedings of the Asiatic Exclusion League*, San Francisco, Allied Printing Trades Council, March 1910, pp. 10-11.

The statement that "the white cannot assimilate the blood of another color" seems to support Thomas Guglielmo's thesis on the existence, in early twentieth-century America, of two different criteria for classifying human beings: colour and race. The former was used to subdivide racial macro groups such as "whites", "blacks" and "yellows", the latter for sub-races within the latter, such as "Mediterraneans" or "Latins" in the case of Italians.[42] According to this scheme, the words in the quotation — "Caucasians" and "Orientals" — are related to the criterion of colour, which corresponds to the "white" of Europeans and the "yellow" of Asians, respectively. The Italian "new immigrants", albeit racially "inferior", fell in the category of "white Caucasians" and could therefore immigrate — within certain limits — to the United States: Asians, being "yellow Orientals", could not. This way of thinking was undoubtedly common within the labour movement in California. The point is that it was an anomaly on the national scene. As Matthew Jacobson explained, the notion of the Caucasian race fully entered American society only from the interwar period onwards, when restrictions on immigration from the Old Continent along with the increasing influx of African Americans into the cities of the industrial North cancelled the distinction between Anglo-Saxons, Celts, Mediterraneans and Slavs.[43] In this regard, the Pacific Coast nevertheless represents an exception. As Alexander Saxton observed, the term "Caucasian" asserted itself in the Californian labour movement as early as the second half of the nineteenth century; it came to stand for anything that wasn't "Chinese, Oriental or Mongolian" and, vice versa, "white and assimilable".[44] The firm equivalence that the Asiatic Exclusion League had constructed between the concepts of Caucasian, white and European therefore did not represent a general paradigm for understanding race; it rather reflected the emergence of an early racial identity among European groups shaped in contrast to Asian immigration, which eroded the differences between the groups themselves in other parts of the country. Being Europeans, the "new immigrants" were recognised as "Caucasians", and this made an "immense difference", in Ronald Takaki's words.[45] In 1908, Andrea Sbarboro — an Italian American businessman from San Francisco — wrote in the *Clarion* that "California and the Pacific States" most certainly "needed" immigration, but "the right kind of immigration, composed of the Caucasian race", while "people of the Mongolian race" were to be excluded. Sbarboro thus dismantled the distinction between the "old stock" and new immigration that had been used to deny the Italians' whiteness by including "the Germans, French, Italians, Swiss, British, Slavs and even the

[42] T. Guglielmo, *White on arrival*, cit., pp. 8-9.

[43] M. Jacobson, *Whiteness of a different color*, cit., pp. 91-135.

[44] A. Saxton, *The indispensable enemy*, cit., p. 18.

[45] Ronald Takaki, *Strangers from a different shore. A history of Asian Americans*, New York, Penguin Books, 1989, p. 15.

Turks" in the "Caucasian race".[46] Similar statements reveal what David Richards has called the "Faustian pact" that Italian immigrants accepted in order to be recognised as white, that is, their conformity to the racist ideology and practices of American society.[47]

The recognition of the "new immigrants" as "Caucasian whites" did not translate into a complete openness towards these immigrants. Racist articles about Italians still appeared in the *Clarion*.[48] Nonetheless, its position remained clear: only the "Orientals" were precluded from assimilation. The distinction should not be made between European groups, but between the latter and the Asian immigrants against whom all efforts had to be concentrated: "If immigration must be restricted," the *Clarion* argued, "let us commence with the undesirables, and who among all the peoples coming here are so undesirable as the Mongolians?"[49] Although the "new immigrants" were labelled as "inferior men", the discriminating criterion of "whiteness" was used not against them but against the Asians, who were "impossible" to integrate because they were the absolute opposite of the "white man", in terms of "work and wages, his living and social conditions".[50] In comparison to the Asian immigrants, the "new immigrants" came across as "Americanisable" and their diffusion across the country was even desired by the *Clarion*:

> [T]he races of Southern Europe, in spite of their colonies, do in part become Americanized, and if these nationalities could be scattered through the country districts more generally it would be advantageous alike to the immigrant, to the government, and to industry. There is another class of aliens pouring into this continent who do not become Americanized at all. We refer now to the yellow races of Asia.[51]

The Asiatic Exclusion League was even more explicit in its conviction that the new immigration from Europe, having peasant origins, should be pushed into agriculture and other seasonal sectors in California that were dominated by Asians:

> Free white men and women who land in New York on their own expenses would gladly accept a proposition to obtain a home and work to support it […] Most of European immi-

[46] Andrea Sbarboro, *Danger of Japanese immigration*, "Labor Clarion", 13 November 1908, p. 5.

[47] David A.J. Richards, *Italian American. The racializing of an ethnic identity*, New York, New York University Press, 1999, p. 187.

[48] *Great influx of immigrants*, "Labor Clarion", 17 February 1905, p. 16; *A million to the bad*, "Labor Clarion", 14 July 1905, p. 11; *Contraband methods and men*, "Labor Clarion", 1 September 1905, p. 40.

[49] *Foreign immigration*, "Labor Clarion", 27 October 1905, p. 10; *The non-assimilable oriental*, "Labor Clarion", 10 November 1905, p. 7.

[50] *The real Asiatic question*, "Labor Clarion", 6 December 1907, p. 6.

[51] *Immigration problems*, "Labor Clarion", 20 December 1907, p. 5.

grants are of the suburban and farming, and would take kindly to our orchards and vineyards and be welcome in all mining and smelting center. We must have labor, but will not have Asiatic people. The great stream of laboring men landing at New York tends to congest the labor market in the East. Why not set on foot a movement looking to shipping thousands of them direct to this coast and recoup the coast from their wages? No law would be violated, and a crying need be answered. European people are of Caucasian lineage and can be assimilated by people here. The Asiatic is wholly out of question.[52]

The idea that the "new immigrants" were welcome in California because they acted as replacements for the Asian workers testifies to the inferiority granted to groups like those of the Italians. Nevertheless, it was precisely the comparison with Asian immigration and the possibility to contrast it that guaranteed them recognition as free white men.

In the years before the First World War, the *Clarion* published a series of front-page articles against the new immigration, which on these occasions was blatantly identified:

Lithuanian, Magyar, Polish, Portuguese, Roumanian, Russian, Servian, Slovak, Slavonian, Syrian, Turkish and South Italian males […] are unlike the old immigration […] Organized labor does most strenuously object to permitting the landing of persons upon our shores who so live as to pauperize and degrade our workingmen.[53]

This belated stance against the new immigration must be read in the context of the tensions raised by the project to open the Panama Canal.[54] It was believed that the cutting of the isthmus would lower travel costs, thus allowing a mass transshipment of "new immigrants" to the West Coast,[55] but the outbreak of the First World War dispelled all fears and stopped the flow. In the meantime, the most consistent influx of "new immigrants" had come to an end, as the immigrants were now integrated into American society. In fact, the image of the "new immigrants" as second-rate yet "white" people in the pages of the *Clarion* coincided with their specific positioning in the hierarchy of organised labour. Italians were mostly excluded from "skilled" labour unions but recruited in an anti-Asian function to the lowest rung of the union organisation, that is, among the "common workers", in line with their identity as "inferior white" people.

[52] Weekly newsletter of the Asiatic Exclusion League #42, n.d.; in Bancroft Library, San Francisco Labor Council Records, Cartoon n. 2, Folder "Asiatic Exclusion League".

[53] *Present immigration undesirable*, "Labor Clarion", 23 May 1913, p. 8.

[54] Paola A. Sensi-Isolani, Phylis C. Martinelli (eds.), *Struggle and Success. An anthology of the Italian immigrant experience in California*, New York, Center for Migration Studies, 1993, p. 13.

[55] *Labor and immigration*, "Labor Clarion", 25 April 1913, p. 8.

The limits of Latinity…

The Italians encountered strong resistance to their integration in skilled manual labour, whose workforce was controlled by trade unions that only let their members work. In this regard, the most vivid testimony comes from the vice-consul of San Francisco, Giulio Ricciardi, who in 1909 wrote the following on the matter:

> The "Trade Unions" […] constitute the most powerful league of resistance ever seen against capital and against the competition of "cheap labor" […] "Skilled labor" is entirely unionist. Bricklayers, carpenters, electricians, plumbers, metalworkers, blacksmiths, painters, etc. each form a sort of completely closed clan, an institution of feudal nature, so to speak, admission into which is a hereditary right […] in order to turn the whole unionist organisation into a clan that is closed to our emigration, the sole condition of having even only a basic knowledge of the English language — without mentioning the other conditions for admission — would suffice. Some […] eventually manage to penetrate it, but they are as rare as white flies and, many times, if they move from one centre to another, they suffer the injustice of not being admitted to the Union of their new residence […] since the vast majority of our emigrants are unable to perform the trade they were charged with in Italy, they go to swell the ranks of unskilled labour.[56]

Many of the mentioned categories adhered to the Building Trades Council (hereafter BTC), which gathered the unions of the building sector: carpenters, bricklayers and painters. The achievements of these groups, under the leadership of the BTC, made it the most powerful body within the labour movement. The building sector was the first closed shop sector. Companies were forced to hire union workers through the mediation of the BTC, which kept an eye out on the possible presence at construction sites of workers without a working card. In return, the BTC offered unified management of the negotiations with building trade unions, which would keep demands within tolerable limits for employers. Skilled labour was not only regulated by the BTC. The metalworking categories aimed at entering the closed shop system through their own coordinating body, the Iron Trades Council, which was supported by the Labor Council.[57] By controlling the workforce that was available on the labour market, these bodies turned their members into a "working-class aristocracy", on which the "old stock" had a monopoly. In 1900, the Irish accounted for 23% of construction workers and 31% of metalworkers, the Germans for 16% and 15% respectively, while the Italians made up just 2% of both categories.[58] For economic

[56] Giulio Ricciardi, *Le condizioni del lavoro e l'emigrazione italiana in California*, in Commissariato dell'Emigrazione, *Emigrazione e colonie — raccolta dei rapporti dei regi agenti diplomatici e consolari*, Rome, Tipografia dell'Unione, 1909, pp. 247-248.

[57] R. Knight, *Industrial relations*, cit., p. 91.

[58] William Issel, Robert Cherny, *San Francisco, 1865-1932. Politics, power, and urban development*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1986, p. 57.

and, not least, racial reasons, these groups raised a barrier against the Italians. In 1907, an official of the Board of Emigration wrote that "it is very difficult for our workers to enter unions in San Francisco because of an ill-concealed hostility on behalf of the American unionist workers against Latin workers".[59] The Italians' "Latinity" was related to a diversity that was not only of a linguistic kind. In 1904, the *Clarion* ascribed the strength of the local labour movement to the "superior intelligence" of the groups that composed it and, vice versa, to the limited presence of the "classes of European immigrants that are most difficult of organization and assimilation".[60] Discrimination against Italians occurred through informal mechanisms, like registration fees and bureaucratic practices, as emerges from the objections raised by an official of the Italian consulate in a letter to the president of the Labor Council, Andrew Gallagher, in 1911:

> Several complaints have reached this office from Italian members of Trade Unions who come here from other States, claiming great difficulties is encountered in transferring and admitting […] finding alacrity in levying fines and assessments not displayed elsewhere […] we take the liberty of addressing yourself with the hope that you will kindly enlighten us on the query why skilled Italian workmen from the East or the Middle West find it so difficult to get employment hereabout.[61]

There was another system to obstruct the Italians: their organisation into separate "Latin unions" subject to the control of central bodies. A good case in point is the situation of the carpenters. San Francisco being 90 per cent wooden, the core of the BTC was made up of carpenters, who were divided into several unions, the largest of which was the Carpenters' Union no. 22: at the start of the twentieth century, it counted some two thousand workers.[62] The BTC gathered the Italian carpenters into the Carpenters' Union no. 95, also known as the Latin Union, which was open also to French and Spanish workers.[63] The adjective "Latin" was ambiguous in that it masked — out of linguistic necessity — the intention of the old "Nordic" stock to marginalise the growing number of Italian "new immigrants", in particular. The creation of this separate "union" followed the example of the Carpenters' Union no. 304, the so-called German Union, one of the oldest carpenter unions in the city. It was founded in the 1880s, when German immigration was partic-

[59] Guido Rossati, *Condizioni del lavoro negli Stati Uniti*, "Bollettino dell'Emigrazione", 1907, n. 3, pp. 66-74, here p. 71.

[60] Lucile Eaves, *Reviews of labor literature*, "Labor Clarion", 25 March 1904, p. 9.

[61] Letter from Gamboni Mazzittelli to Andrew Gallagher, 19 October 1911; in Bancroft Library, San Francisco Labor Council Records, Cartoon n. 15, Folder "Royal Italian Department of Emigration".

[62] M. Kazin, *Barons of labor*, cit., p. 37, p. 104.

[63] *Italian carpenters*, "San Francisco Call", 25 March 1896, p. 5.

ularly strong. The aim of these separate unions was to encourage the unionisation of those who did not speak English; for the Germans, union integration proceeded in this way. German sections within unions existed in various sectors and were known for being the most "persistent" and "successful".[64] The Carpenters' Union no. 304 did not have many members, but this was because the Germans had integrated so well.[65] The "Latin union" of carpenters, by contrast, did not enjoy the same effectiveness. In 1900, only a few years after its establishment, it counted no more than 33 members.[66] Although during the 15-year boom of Italian immigration its membership increased, it did not rise sharply. In 1902, *Organized Labor* — the BTC's newspaper — described the fact that ten new members had been "initiated" in No. 95 as an "unparalleled case".[67] A petition launched in 1909 by the newspaper *L'Italia* in support of the victims of the Messina earthquake, showed that membership had grown to at least 60 members.[68] With a print run of 15,125 copies per edition, *L'Italia* was the largest Italian-language newspaper on the West Coast.[69] Its editor, Ettore Patrizi, was a former socialist who had converted to fierce nationalism in the United States. Although Patrizi sometimes considered the trade unions' demands excessive, he supported union membership because he considered it a symbol of integration, which replaced the traditional competition with "American or other workers of Anglo-Saxon race".[70] The newspaper frequently published information concerning the Carpenters' Union no. 95 (e.g. the appointment of managers, meetings, events), proudly claiming the "Latin" identity that the American trade union branded on South European workers with undisguised contempt. According to *L'Italia*, the "Latin union" contained "Italians, Frenchmen and Spaniards" (in this order); these groups had been trying to help each other within an English-speaking society long before mass emigration started by weaving a dense network of social relations.[71] We do not know who the "Spaniards" exactly were. Logically, they would have been Californian natives and Mexican immigrants, although some members of the Italian

[64] L. Eaves, *A history of California labor legislation*, cit., p. 4.

[65] By 1900, the Carpenters' Union n. 304 had less than hundred members. California Bureau of Labor statistics, *Biennial report, years 1899-1900*, Sacramento, State Printing Office, 1900, p. 93.

[66] California Bureau of Labor statistics, *Biennial report, years 1899-1900*, cit., p. 93.

[67] *Carpenters*, "Organized Labor", 17 May 1902, p. 7.

[68] *Continua l'opera buona in pro' dei nostri sventurati fratelli italiani*, "L'Italia", 11 January 1909, p. 4.

[69] *Newspaper Rate Book. Season 1916-1917*, Nelson Chesman & Co. Publishers, St. Louis, p. 18.

[70] Ettore Patrizi, *Gl'italiani in California*, San Francisco, Stabilimento tipo-litografico del giornale L'ITALIA, 1911, p. 34.

[71] On this issue see Alessandro Baccari, Andrew M. Canepa, Olga Richardson, GioBatta Cerruti and G.B. Cerruti, *The Italians of San Francisco in 1865: G.B. Cerruti's report to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, "California History", 1981/1982, n. 4, pp. 350-369.

community — aspiring to "whiteness" — already drew a clear distinction between their European "Latinity" and that of the Hispanic Americans.[72] Nonetheless, the Carpenters' Union no. 95 was essentially Italian. Rather than being a reflection of traditional inter-Latin cooperation, it was the product of the barrier to integration that Italians had encountered in the union. At the dawn of the First World War, membership had risen to just 160 workers — a relatively low number considering that it was the only "Latin union" of the building sector.[73] The reasons for the failure were to be sought in the centralised management of power within the BTC: the allocation of the working cards, apprenticeships, disputes over contracts between the "unions", their internal regulations and strikes — everything was handled by the central bodies. In the carpentry industry, a tyrannical system made the "unions" no smaller than the satellite unions of the Carpenters' Union no. 22. Rebellious unions were expelled and their members stripped of their membership cards.[74] It seems unlikely that, within such a centralised structure, the "Latin" Carpenters' Union no. 95 could have had the power, or the will, to expand its ranks at will. If the Italian carpenters increased in number, they would only have enhanced the competition within their union. Hence, the "Latin unions" actually represented an instrument of co-optation from above, aimed at burdening the Italians themselves with the task of their selection for entry into the exclusive trade categories. On the other hand, as Patrizi noted, "once they had entered" the "unions", the Italians remained "faithful to their principles and scrupulous observers of the unions' rules", clearly taking equal advantage of the "trade-unionist" corporatism.[75]

Being excluded from the trade categories, Italians swelled the ranks of unskilled labour. A sample of 510 Italian immigrants, taken from the 1910 census, reveals that the largest category of workers was that of the ordinary manual labourers, that is, those with general or occasional tasks. Only half of these could claim skilled employment in construction or metalwork, whereas factory workers also remained excluded from skilled labour: most did not declare a specific job in the census or they declared an unskilled one, for example cannery worker.

Jobs involving Italian workers in San Francisco (1910).[76]

[72] Adriana Spadoni, *Truth about the Latin Quarter*, "San Francisco Chronicle", 16 October 1904, p. 12.

[73] M. Kazin, *Barons of labor*, cit., p. 24; Kazin mentions a "latin union" of "painters", but does not give any specific information on the matter.

[74] R. Knight, *Industrial relations*, cit., pp. 123-124; M. Kazin, *Barons of labor*, cit., pp. 103-104; see the rules on apprenticeships in F. Ryan, *Industrial relations*, cit., p. 84.

[75] Patrizi, *Gl'Italiani in California*, cit., p. 34.

[76] The data were derived from the census sheets of the "1910 United States Federal Census", consulted at: www.ancestry.com.

Unskilled laborer (street work, general work, odd jobs, etc.)	124	24,31%
Skilled worker (carpenter, plasterer, painter, metal work, etc.	60	11,76%
Merchant (proprietor/shop keeper)	41	8,03%
Farmer (gardener/truck farm)	32	6,27%
Fisherman	28	5,49%
Laborer grocery (laborer fruit store, laborer wine cellar, etc.)	21	4,11%
Janitor and porter	20	3,92%
Salesman and Clerk	20	3,92%
Waiter and bartender	18	3,53%
Laborer factory	16	3,14%
Stableman	14	2,75%
Peddler	14	2,75%
Teamster	13	2,55%
Bootblack	11	2,16%
Professional (manager, dentist, editor, etc.)	11	2,16%
Scavenger	11	2,16%
Cook	8	1,57%
Seaman	8	1,57%
Baker	7	1,37%
Window washer	6	1,18%
Laborer food (Macaroni Factory, sausage factory, etc.	6	1,18%
Tailor	6	1,18%
Barber	5	0,98%
Butcher	5	0,98%
Musician/Artist	5	0,98%
	510	100%

Studies on the occupational structure of Italians in the United States reveal an abundance of menial jobs related to "domestic and personal services".[77] In the table, the total number of servants, doormen, waiters, bartenders, boot polishers, waste collectors, window washers and barbers exceeds the percentage of skilled workers. An important escape route from marginalisation in the urban job market was commerce.[78] The spin-off activities of fishing and farming, which were controlled by the Italians, provided a large number of jobs: from wholesalers to pedlars, from shop assistants to grocery clerks.

[77] Dino Cinel, *From Italy to San Francisco. The immigration experience*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1982, p. 136.

[78] P. Sensi-Isolani, P. Martinelli (eds.), *Struggle and success*, cit., p. 80.

The low presence of Italians in the trade categories was not only the result of discrimination: since most of them had come to the United States with the idea of staying temporarily, it must have been unattractive for them to join a union. Moreover, many Italians did not have a trade union culture, especially if they were of peasant origin. Nevertheless, what represented a real disincentive was the trade unions' conservatism, which did not suit their status as newcomers. This is further confirmed by the case of the bread industry. Here, it was not possible to exclude the Italians because they were employed in the bakeries of their compatriots; unionising them was therefore a compulsory choice if, as the Bakers' Union no. 24 observed, there was any intention of enforcing "union rules in every baker shop […] in the city and county of San Francisco and vicinity".[79] The Bakers' Union no. 24 was born in 1900 from the fusion of the American and German bakers' "unions", who had obtained rest on Saturday evenings.[80] To organise the Italians into unions, no. 24 initially created "Latin unions" but without obtaining the desired results.[81] Already in 1905, the first of several boycotts was launched against "Latin" ovens that were accused of not conforming to the rules.[82] The rhetoric used on these occasions did not spare the Italian workers, who were considered accomplices of their employers. The insults began with the statement that everything had been done to organise the workers of the "Latin Bakeries", and then proceeded to attack the latter, accusing them of being "corrupt" and inclined to accept conditions of "slavery".[83] Such media pillory testified to the presence of prejudices against "Latins", as exemplified in this biting remark of 1908:

> The French and Italian Bakers have been organized by Local No. 24, but they are difficult to control […] they work all kinds of hours for little pay, and never have a day of rest. It might be said that they live in the bake shops, and their employers see to it that they have an abundance of "dago red" constantly on hand.[84]

Although such representations denounced real conditions of exploitation, they strongly criticised Italian workers, demonstrating not so much their organisational limitations but those of the Bakers' Union no. 24. Its claim to organise Italian bakers within a separate labour market (i.e. the Latin bakeries) and to subordinate it to the rules it had established at the city level was undoable, because it encouraged the Italian community's tendency to form a closed

[79] *Journeymen bakers. History of the organization*, "Labor Clarion", 14 March 1902, p. 12.

[80] R. Knight, *Industrial relations*, cit., p. 46.

[81] Initially Union n. 117, and subsequently the French and Italian Bakers' Union n. 324: *Ai lavoranti panettieri*, "L'Italia", 28 January 1901, p. 5; *French and Italian bakers*, "Labor Clarion", 3 July 1903, p. 7.

[82] *Non-union bakeries*, "Labor Clarion", 11 August 1905, p. 5.

[83] *The Latin bakeries*, "Labor Clarion", 24 January 1913, p. 8.

[84] *History of Bakers' Union*, "Labor Clarion", 4 September 1908, p. 36. The expression "dago red" was used to used to disparage Italian immigrants' home-made wine.

economic entity, difficult to penetrate by trade union activities. The aims and negotiating skills of the Italian bakers were necessarily proportionate to the context in which they operated; they were not passive. They organised themselves periodically, even autonomously from the Bakers' Union no. 24, which stopped organising them for a while after the failure of the "Latin unions", relying on boycotts instead.[85] They then formed the Italian Bakers' Union. Towards the end of 1907, community pressure forced the latter to accept a "gesture of solidarity" concerning the employment crisis that the financial "panic" of the autumn had generated.[86] An agreement with the bakery owners established that union members would give up four working days per month to unemployed Italians. However, the employers used the "labour exchange" mechanism to reopen the doors of the sector to "non-union" labour, complaining that the unemployed recruited via the Union lacked the skills to do the job.[87] A strike was declared, which reaffirmed the willingness to meet the needs of the inactive compatriots but without accepting the fact that they were used as a "phalanx" to the detriment of the category: "[T]he truth is that our Union only accepts real bakers who know the trade […] before the Union was organised […] the workers were paid starvation wages, slept on the floor and ate food worthy of pigs."[88] There was no lack of a "unionist" spirit, but it was toned down to respond to the need for work in Little Italy, a problem that would be exploited by an alliance of employers who were hostile to the union and capable of putting pressure on the bakers, branding them as the cause of rising bread prices.[89] *L'Italia*, in keeping a neutral attitude, did not help.[90] The newspaper presented itself as a defender not of class interests, but of the Italian group. It supported the Italians' entry into the trade unions, but only the American ones, whereas its attitude in the community was more moderate. It is clear, then, why the Italian bakeries did not succeed in imposing "free Saturdays" but only shifts that — although providing for a day of rest — left the seven-day-a-week routine intact. The Bakers' Union no. 24 was angry because it was a downward mediation.[91] Where it failed, though, was in its trade union approach: instead of pushing Italian workers out of social marginalisation, it first locked them into an ethnic and occupational niche and then denigrated them owing to organisational failures.

While the trade categories used "Latinity" to exclude the Italians, the Industrial Workers of the World (hereafter IWW) turned it into a method of revolutionary agitation. The IWW were an anarcho-syndicalist movement, opposed

[85] *Contro i fornai italiani e francesi*, "L'Italia", 23 September 1908, p. 4.
[86] *L'Unione dei panettieri e i padroni panettieri*, "L'Italia", 24 January 1908, p. 4.
[87] *Avviso al pubblico*, "L'Italia", 23 January 1908, p. 4.
[88] *L'Unione dei panettieri e i padroni panettieri*, "L'Italia", 24 January 1908, p. 4.
[89] *Il prezzo del pane*, "L'Italia", 3 December 1903, p. 5.
[90] *Ancora il rincaro del pane*, "L'Italia", 9 August 1906, p. 4
[91] *The Latin bakeries*, "Labor Clarion", 24 January 1913, p. 8.

to the trade-unionist type of union. The doors were open to all workers, especially unskilled workers, and no distinctions of "race" were made. The organisation was decentralised and horizontal, and it aimed at achieving not contractual but political objectives: to overthrow the capitalist system through the direct action of one big union.[92] In 1910, a group of Italian and French workers founded a "Latin branch" of the IWW in San Francisco's Little Italy.[93] This organisation along ethnic lines was an exception that served, in this case, to implement a specific strategy of action: to mobilise those "Latin" workers who were discriminated against by the trade categories. Socialist newspapers such as *Il Proletario*, which also had inserts in French, or anarchist newspapers such as the Spanish-language *El Rebelde*, were used as propaganda tools. The echo of the Mexican Revolution that reached the city from the southern border encouraged the creation, for political purposes, of a Latin identity shared more explicitly between Southern Europeans and Hispanic Americans. The initial objectives of the Latin Branch's propaganda were the Italian and French bakers whom the Bakers' Union no. 24 considered "unorganisable". The Latin Branch launched an agitation campaign aimed at exposing the problem of their exploitation and the contradictions of a skilled trade unionism. Members were recruited during public rallies. Viewed with suspicion both inside and outside the Italian community, police started to ban the rallies until, in August 1911, an attempt to arrest the speakers led to a riot that had a similar outcome as the various "Free Speech Fights" triggered by the IWW in California.[94] Such protests gave the migrant workers visibility, forcing those involved in their marginalisation to take a stand. Together with conservative sectors of public opinion, the Labor Council urged police repression of the rallies.[95] Thus, the ambiguous attitude of the "unions" was revealed, prompting even *L'Italia* to side with the Wobblies:

> Who, among the unionists, lifted even a finger to give them help and comfort? The Unions watched the events unfold with the most stoic indifference, closed within the narrow boundaries of selfish interests that turn them into just as many churches, disdainful of extending a hand to workers in whose veins no Anglo-Saxon blood flows.[96]

In the long run, the Latin Branch failed to keep its membership growing. Italian bakeries remained impervious to stable trade union gains. Moreover, the IWW faced increasing repression, which culminated in arrests and depor-

[92] Philip S. Foner, *History of the labor movement in the United States*, vol. IV, *The Industrial Workers of the World*, New York, International Publishers, 1965.

[93] Paola A. Sensi-Isolani, *Italian radicals and union activism in San Francisco, 1900-1920*, in Philip V. Cannistraro, Gerald Meyer (eds.), *The lost world of Italian-American radicalism*, Westport, Praeger Publishers, 2003, p. 189; Kenyon Zimmer, *Immigrants against the State: Yiddish and Italian anarchism in America*, Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 2015, pp. 95-102.

[94] P. Sensi-Isolani, *Italian radicals and union activists in San Francisco*, cit., pp. 195-197.

[95] *The menace of the IWW*, "Labor Clarion", 16 February 1912, p. 5.

[96] *Unionismo, socialismo, fratellanza*, "L'Italia", 25 August 1911, p. 1.

tations during the First World War. The IWW's legacy resided less in their organisational imprint than it did in the agitations aroused among those categories of workers who were considered "unorganisable" and, therefore, neglected by the "trade-unionist" type of union for reasons of class, race and — as we will see in the last section — gender.

… privileges of whiteness (and masculinity)

Although the Italians were discriminated against as "Latins", their position in the job market remained distinct from that of the Asian immigrants. First of all, the marginality of the Italian labourers was softened by the possibility of employment in the public sector. The manual labourers of San Francisco had established the Laborers' Protective Union, which was affiliated with the BTC. It had opened its doors to the Italians at least in a first instance, encouraging them to join.[97] On the occasion of a strike in 1903, the leaders praised "the Italian day labourers for the splendid example of solidarity they gave, responding with impetus and unanimity to the Union's orders".[98] For some years, *L'Italia* published information on the Laborers' Protective Union, hence considering that it would be of interest to its readership.[99] However, this moment of bliss waned, probably as a result of the increase in the number of Italians. The Laborers' Protective Union was under the control of the Irish, who did not intend to give up their right of first refusal on public works. Lobbying began to enact ordinances that forced local employers to give preference to workers with citizenship.[100] Moreover, there were cases in which the Irish were preferred to the Italians even if both candidates lacked citizenship.[101] Yet, many Italians — especially those who had arrived more recently — found employment with or without the trade unions' support, for example in the resurfacing of municipal roads. In a sample drawn from the 1910 census of 550 Italian residents who had immigrated to San Francisco in the first decade of the twentieth century, no less than nine per cent was represented by the "street work labourer" category.[102] It may well be that the Italians' massive presence in this category was favoured by the Italian community's political connections, which enabled it to act as a buffer against discrimination. The municipal coun-

[97] *Una riunione di laborers. Oltre 400 braccianti italiani sono presenti*, "L'Italia", 29 April 1903, p. 5.

[98] *La vittoria completa dei braccianti*, "L'Italia", 6 May 1903, p. 5.

[99] See, for example, *Laborers' Protective Union No. 8944*, "L'Italia", 2 December 1904, p. 5.

[100] Joseph Giovinco, *Success in the sun? California's Italians during the Progressive Era*, in P. Sensi-Isolani, P. Martinelli (eds.), *Struggle and success*, cit., p. 28.

[101] *Operai italiani state in guardia!*, "L'Italia", 31 August 1911, p. 3.

[102] The data were derived from the census sheets of the "1910 United States Federal Census", consulted at: www.ancestry.com.

cillor Attilio H. Giannini, brother of the banker Amadeo, chaired the Public Services Commission in 1908, at the start of a series of municipal works for which the citizenship clause was not applied.[103] The "anti-orientalism" clause was, instead, taken for granted.

The continuous act of inclusion/exclusion by trade unions could suggest a "racial transience" of Italian immigrants, never permanently placed on one or the other side of the "colour line".[104] In reality, the Italians had a solid position within the "white" labourer dimension. In fact, while continuing to discriminate against them, the unskilled labour organisations granted the Italians the most significant privilege of whiteness: that of taking advantage of the contrast to Asian labour. As Alexander Saxton explained, trade unions on the Pacific Coast applied a policy of "total exclusion" of Asian immigrants without parallel even in the discriminatory practices against African American workers on the Atlantic side. The reason for this is that the Asians were not just "non-whites", but "non-white" immigrants, hence excluded by law from citizenship and therefore deprived of even the very limited rights accorded to African Americans after the Civil War.[105] The "total exclusion" of Asians went hand in hand with the Italians' inclusion in the ranks of "white labour", as some incidents involving the janitors' union demonstrate. The outbreak of the economic crisis in the autumn of 1907 created unemployment in the Italian community, which a Pro-Unemployed Committee — made up of several prominent figures, including the editor of *L'Italia*, Patrizi — sought to tackle. With the aim of helping a group of unemployed Italians, Patrizi wrote to the Board of Public Works specifying — perhaps in an attempt to make his proposal more attractive — that they would have been "willing to work for less than the average wage, that is, for $1.50 or $1.25 a day".[106] The same request for help was extended to the Labor Council after Secretary Gallagher learned of the offer of low-cost Italian labourers.[107] Despite some irritation, the Labor Council took up the issue of the unemployed Italians:

> Secretary Gallagher is to have a conference with the representatives of the saloon men's association. He will endeavor to induce saloon men to secure men furnished by the janitors' union

[103] *Grandi lavori in vista per le opere municipali. Un'intervista col Dr. Giannini — Non meno di cinquemila operai saranno occupati fra due mesi per i lavori del Municipio. A detti lavori potranno prender parte anche coloro che non sono cittadini americani*, "L'Italia", 26 September 1908, p. 4.

[104] On the concept of "racial transiency" see Jessica Barbata Jackson, *Dixie's Italians. Sicilians, race, and citizenship in the Jim Crow Gulf South*, Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 2020, pp. 22-23.

[105] Alexander Saxton, *The rise and fall of the white republic: class, politics, and mass culture in Nineteenth-Century America*, Verso, New York, 2003, pp. 302-303.

[106] Letter from Ettore Patrizi to the Board of Public Works, 21 December 1907; in Bancroft Library, San Francisco Labor Council Records, Cartoon n. 10, Folder "L'Italia".

[107] Letter from Ettore Patrizi to Andrew Gallagher, 26 December 1907; in Bancroft Library, San Francisco Labor Council Records, Cartoon n. 10, Folder "L'Italia".

to do the work now performed by Orientals […] a communication of the editor of L'Italia, asking employment for Italian laborers […] was read […] one of the delegates suggested that the best thing that could be done with these laborers was to unionize them and find them work in places now filled by Japanese and other Orientals.[108]

Thanks to Patrizi's intermediation, the unemployed Italians were involved in a city-wide mobilisation to replace the Asian saloon and restaurant janitors with "white labour". *L'Italia* reported the following:

The Director is negotiating with the Labor Council, which […] is trying to induce all owners of Restaurants, Cafés and Saloons in the city to employ white workers as janitors instead of Mongolians. There are more than a thousand Japanese and Chinese workers employed as janitors in the city and there is no reason that they should not be replaced by whites, be they Americans, Italians, French, etc. […] of the thousand something places available, some two or three hundred will be reserved for Italians.[109]

To achieve this goal, the Labor Council organised a conference involving the Janitors' Union and the saloon owners' association.[110] A representative of *L'Italia* recorded the words of the Labor Council's secretary:

"[W]e have here", Gallagher added, "a representative of the Italian colony who says that many of his compatriots are now unemployed. We all know what "desirable citizens" the Italians are; we know their honesty, sobriety and the fondness they bear for their adopted country […] and we are meant to let so many of these strong and willing workers suffer misery, all the while yellow people, useless if not harmful to our citizenship, continue to be employed and paid?"[111]

Even if the saloon owners' association rejected the proposal to "discharge Asiatic janitors and replace them by white men" because "the association felt that it had no power to take the action asked",[112] the replacement plan was partly put into effect. The *San Francisco Call* reported the following statement by a saloon: "I discharged my Japanese two days ago, and took an Italian. The work that this man does makes me feel sorry that I did not make the change long ago".[113]

The logic of the "total exclusion" of Asians was an incentive for the Italians to join the union movement, as the case of the butchers' shops of Little Italy demonstrates. The Butchers' Union was one of the most active organisations to have emerged outside the traditional working-class universe. It tried to impose the closed shop system, engaging in battles with

[108] *To ask saloon men to discharge Orientals*, "San Francisco Call", 28 December 1907, p. 7.
[109] *Per i nostri disoccupati*, "L'Italia", 8 January 1908, p. 4.
[110] *Per dar lavoro ai disoccupati nei saloons*, "L'Italia", 22 January 1908, p. 4.
[111] *Il Labor Council per i disoccupati*, "L'Italia", 25 January 1908, p. 4.
[112] *Liquor dealers reply regarding Asiatic help submitted to Janitors' Union*, "San Francisco Call", 20 February 1908, p. 9.
[113] *Liquor dealers let Japanese go*, "San Francisco Call", 23 January 1908, p. 7.

meat retailers to force them to accept its standards, in particular, that of closing on Sundays.[114] The butchers of Little Italy were initially reluctant to conform and consequently boycotted.[115] Their reluctance was the result of the same anti-union culture that we have seen with the Italian bakery owners. Compared to the latter, though, the butchers' resistance had an additional excuse: competition from butchers in the adjacent Chinese district. In 1903, the Butchers' Union wrote to *L'Italia* to protest against a butcher in the Italian neighbourhood who had decided to stay open on Sundays. In the rhetorical strategy, "whiteness" served as a symbolic weapon of pressure to promote "unionisation":

> Dear Sirs,
> Mr E. Delvecchio, owner of the Butcher Shop at 328 Broadway, has sent a letter to the Labor Council, informing them that as of 10 June, he will keep his shop open on Sundays […] Mr Delvecchio says that the Chinese also keep their shops open on Sundays. It is disgraceful that a white man wants to stoop to the level of the Chinese, and it is to be hoped that Mr Delvecchio will desist from his idea and follow the example of the 300 butchers in the city. The Chinese butchers sell meat from old bulls and old, unhealthy milk cows. Bringing this to the attention of the public (and *ITALIA* has done this several times in recent years, warning its compatriots of the danger of buying meat slaughtered in the Chinese district) should suffice to ensure that no white person buys meat in the Chinese butcher shops.[116]

According to the Butchers' Union, the Italian butchers should not have bowed to Chinese competition. Rather, they should have "taught" their fellow countrymen to behave like "white people". In the end, it was *L'Italia* that came to the rescue of the Little Italy shopkeepers, by publishing articles that stigmatised Chinatown using the typical stereotypes of a "filthy" and "unhealthy" place, in an attempt to dissuade Italians from shopping there.[117] The Italian newspaper lent itself to this pedagogy of whiteness towards Italian immigrants in that it implied the recognition of the longed-for racial equality with Americans. Unlike Italian bakeries, the butchers were eventually "unionised". In 1918, the *Clarion* declared that "the Italian butchers of North Beach are now 100 per cent organized and that the meat markets of that section of the city are now being conducted according to the prescribed rules of the Butchers' Union".[118] However, this success did not reflect the development of a union culture in Little Italy: where there was no threat of competition from Chinatown traders, the unionisation

[114] L. Eaves, *A history of California labor legislation*, cit., p. 62; R. Knight, *Industrial relations*, cit., p. 71.

[115] *Butchers*, "Labor Clarion", 7 August 1903, p. 6.

[116] *S.F. Butcher Union W.P. Union No 115*, "L'Italia", 16 May 1903, p. 5. Original emphasis.

[117] *Comperate nei negozi italiani*, "L'Italia", 4 September 1908, p. 4.

[118] *Butchers organize Italians*, "Labor Clarion", 29 March 1918, p. 1; *Organizing Italians*, "Labor Clarion", 15 March 1918, p. 4.

campaigns failed.[119] Rather, the adherence of butchers to the Butchers' Union revealed the emergence in Little Italy of a white and racist version of Italian identity, shaped in opposition to its Chinese neighbours. In sum, Italians were included in the unions in only two cases: either when they served to exclude Asians or when they did not bother the "old stock", hence in low-level occupations. This was the case of the unions representing grooms; to facilitate their integration, the unions removed the clauses relating to citizenship from the registration requirements and printed the statutes in Italian.[120] Being included — albeit only partially — in the labour movement did have its advantages. In an attempt to defend their interests, the Italian boot polishers launched the Bootblacks Union no. 10175, which was affiliated with the Labor Council with which they negotiated licences and taxes to be paid to the municipality.[121] In a "unionist" city like San Francisco, all these possibilities were out of reach for Asian labourers.

"Being white" became even more useful to Italians outside of "organised labour". In sectors where trade unions were absent, Italians ended up competing with the Chinese, as happened in two profitable market niches: fishing and agriculture. Here, the Italians became the dominant group thanks to their technical and organisational skills, combined with their efficient use of the cooperative instrument, furthermore reinforced by parochial unity. However, no less decisive for their success was the racist climate that affected their Chinese competitors, which the Italians took advantage of to oust them, even with the use of force.[122] Having the quality of "whiteness" was also the basis of the "good fortune" of Italians employed in menial but lucrative jobs, such as scavenging.[123] To understand what kind of work this entailed it is enough to cite these words by a former scavenger, who thus summarised what "the average person in San Francisco thought of the men employed in the service": "Anyone can be a garbage man, that is, have a strong back, a weak mind, and (an added caveat) do the work of an Italian."[124] Yet, "whiteness" was

[119] In addition to the grocery clerks (see the opening quote), the many Italians employed as waiters were also excluded from the "unions": *Grave questione tra ristoratori, cuochi e camerieri*, "L'Italia", 7 December 1903, p. 5.

[120] Paul Chatom, *Industrial relations in the brewery, metal and teaming trades*. Thesis for the degree of Master of Science, University of California Berkeley, 1915, p. 102.

[121] Letter from Frank Morrison to John O'Connell, 26 March 1914; in Bancroft Library, San Francisco Labor Council Records, Cartoon n. 3, Folder "Boot Blacks' Protective Union, San Francisco, No. 10175". In this letter from the secretary of the American Federation of Labor to that of the San Francisco Labor Council, the former claims that 90 per cent of the city's boot polishers were Italian and Greek immigrants.

[122] Simone Cinotto, *Soft soil, black grapes.* The birth of Italian wine making in California, New York, New York University Press, 2012, p. 199; Sucheng Chan, *This bitter-sweet soil. The Chinese in California agriculture*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1986, pp. 114-115.

[123] Stewart E. Perry, *San Francisco Scavengers. Dirty work and the pride of ownership*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1978, pp. 15-30.

[124] Leonard Stefanelli, *Everything you wanted to know about 'garbage' and were afraid to ask: a personal San Francisco perspective*, "The Argonaut", 2014, n.1, pp. 4-19, here p. 8.

a necessary prerequisite for this kind of employment. Although not paid by the municipality, scavengers provided a public service that required a negotiating power with the city's administration, which was unthinkable for Asian immigrants. Through the Scavengers' Protective Union, the Italians monopolised the collection, recycling and disposal of waste, and even managed to make a decent living out of it.[125]

The experience of "whiteness" was more contradictory for Italian female workers. Their integration into the job market was conditioned not only by racial factors but also by gender differences. Their relationship with unions was marked by modest successes. Being employed in jobs of little interest to the "white male" worker, Italian immigrant women were considered less of a threat than their male counterparts. Thus, at the start of the twentieth century, the majority of the Cracker Packers' Union — which represented female biscuit factory workers engaged in canning tasks — was composed of Italian women workers.[126] Another positive example of unionisation is that of female bookbinders.[127] The case of Italian women workers in the garment industry reveals how, even within women's unions, the organisation and acquisition of "whiteness" were interconnected. The United Garment Workers had two tasks: it organised the Italian "new workers", exerting an "educative influence" to teach them the American "standards of work and living", and it pursued the battle for the "the protection of its members from the rivalry of the Chinese".[128]

Nevertheless, involvement in trade unions concerned only a minority of Italian women. In terms of employment, most of them remained confined to the Italian community.[129] For instance, thousands of Italian female workers were employed in the fruit preservation factories owned by the tycoon Marco Fontana. To understand what it meant for them to be cut out of the unionist movement, we need only consider that they worked on a piecework basis, for more than ten hours a day and with an average wage of well under a dollar; their fellow countrywomen in the above-mentioned biscuit factories worked up to nine hours and, depending on the job, earned between $1.25 and $1.75 a day.[130] The unions ignored the Italian "new immigrant women" of the canneries, even if their degrading working conditions frequently made the

[125] E. Patrizi, *Gl'Italiani in California*, cit., p. 44.

[126] Lillian R. Matthews, *Women in trade unions San Francisco*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1913, pp. 70-71.

[127] Louise M. Ploeger, *Trade unionism among the women of San Francisco, 1920*. Thesis for Master of Arts in Economics. University of California Berkeley, 1920, p. 53.

[128] L. Matthews, *Women in trade Union in San Francisco*, cit., pp. 57-64.

[129] P. Sensi-Isolani, P. Martinelli (eds.), *Struggle and Success*, cit., p. 80.

[130] Amy A. Bernardy, *Sulla condizione delle donne e dei fanciulli italiani negli Stati del Centro e dell'Ovest della Confederazione del Nord-America*, "Bollettino dell'Emigrazione", 1911, n. 1, pp. 1-171, here p. 44; L. Matthews, *Women in trade unions San Francisco*, cit., p. 68.

news in the city's newspapers.[131] The seasonal and "ethnic" nature of this type of employment, combined with traditional racial and — not least — gender prejudices, can explain this indifference. The AFL only noticed the presence of these women in 1917, when the IWW started unionising the industry. That year, a series of strikes broke out in canning factories across the San Francisco Bay Area, halting production that was crucial to war preparations.[132] Following the strikes, the Californian state allegedly investigated women's work and promoted protective legislation. Italian women were therefore not "unorganisable", as the AFL had claimed.[133] On the other hand, it is true that cultural resistance to union membership was not exclusive to the male counterpart of the Italian community. Carol McKibben's study on Italian female sardine cannery workers employed in a Monterey factory demonstrates that, in the interwar period, by the time the cannery sector was becoming unionised, the women remained reluctant to join the "unions" and exploited the "public space" of the work context to pursue familiar strategies of social ascendancy.[134]

Being relegated to sectors that the unions neglected, Italian women workers found themselves on the edge of "whiteness". In 1891, a female journalist from the *San Francisco Chronicle* was shocked to discover that "white women" were employed in a Chinese-owned cannery:

> The women are all Italians or of Italian parentage. About half of them were questioned before one was found who would talk. She was apparently born in this country […] "I have only been here for three weeks," she said, "but much of the women are old hands […] "would I rather work for a Chinese than an American? What a silly question! Of course not, but what is one to do? […] They treat us well. The foremen is a Chinaman, but he never says anything to us as long as we do our work well."[135]

For the journalist, the Italian women were unmistakably "white"; the article was, in fact, titled "White girls working for the Mongols". However, their subordination to a Chinese "boss" turned the dominant racial hierarchies upside down, bringing to light the limits that "masculinity" placed on the privileges of "whiteness".

[131] *Violate the laws of sanitation*, "San Francisco Call", 21 August 1898, p. 15.

[132] Elizabeth Reis, *Cannery row: The AFL, the IWW and Bay Area cannery workers*, "California History", 1985, n. 3, pp. 174-190.

[133] R. Knight, *Industrial relations*, cit., p. 276. On other female workers' strikes during the First World War, see *Ancora uno sciopero alla fabbrica Ghirardelli*, "Il Corriere del Popolo", 26 March 1918.

[134] Carol L. McKibben, *Beyond cannery row. Sicilian women, immigration, and community in Monterey, California (1915-99)*, Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 2006, pp. 35-56.

[135] *A Chinese cannery. Located in the hearth of San Francisco*, "San Francisco Chronicle", 10 July 1891, p. 10.

Conclusion

The Italians' attempts at integrating into the San Francisco labour movement highlights the importance of the regional context of race relations when trying to understand the more general question of the "whiteness" of Italian immigrants in the United States between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Since race is a "social construction", its meaning is always contextual to the dimension of relations in which it emerges and is used to discriminate against other human beings. From this point of view, the Italians' racial identity on the Pacific Coast was "constructed" differently from that on the Atlantic side precisely because the Californian working class defined the meaning of "whiteness", and its boundaries concerning the very specific issue of Asian immigration, in a different way. I have argued that Italians in San Francisco fit more into the paradigm of "white on arrival" than that of "inbetween people", but this is not a general rule for all of the United States. In the big cities of the East and Midwest, Italian immigrant workers were marginalised along with African Americans. The two groups were also verbally lumped together through denigrating epithets that served to emphasise the racial otherness of the new European immigrants as opposed to that of the "old stock", under the discriminating profile of "whiteness".[136] In such contexts, then, the concept of "inbetween people" — whose purpose was to focus the attention on the Italians' initial social proximity with the African-American minority — seems an appropriate one.[137] By contrast, the paradigm of "racial inbetweenness" is clearly not applicable to the case of the Italians in San Francisco: no contiguity was created between them and the local "non-white" minority, the Asians. The opposition to Asian immigration stimulated the early recognition — by the "old stock" — of the "whiteness" of the "new immigrants" in the name of a common "Caucasian" identity, which had not yet emerged among European groups in other parts of the United States. It was therefore the racial dynamics of the Pacific Coast — centred on the "total exclusion" of Asians — that determined the Italians' "white on arrival" identity in the Californian city. Their involvement in the anti-Asian labour movement, in particular, dispels any doubts about their racial status as well as the meaning of "whiteness"; according to Eric Arnesen's stinging critique of Whiteness Studies, its definition would be too

[136] J. Higham, *Strangers in the land*, cit., p. 173. Donald Tricarico, *Labels and Stereotypes*, in Salvatore J. LaGumina, Frank J. Cavaioli, Salvatore Primeggia, Joseph A. Varacalli (eds.), *The Italian American experience: an encyclopedia*, New York, Garland Publishing, 2000, p. 319.

[137] Robert Orsi, *The religious boundaries of an in-between people: street Feste and the problem of the dark-skinned other in Italian Harlem, 1920-1990*, "American Quarterly", 1992, n. 3, pp. 313-347.

"vague" within historical research.[138] For the Italians of San Francisco, "being white" meant the possibility to exercise, from the very moment of arrival, a very concrete privilege: that of participating in the oppression of "non-whites" and enjoying the consequent material and symbolic advantages.

[138] Eric Arnesen, *Whiteness and the historians' imagination*, "International Labor and Working-Class History", October 2001, pp. 3-32, here p. 6.

The "aquiline race". The Etruscans between Fascist racism, Nazi racism and the Catholic Church*

Andrea Avalli**

This article aims to demonstrate that the debate about the origin of the Etruscans can help identify the scientific and ideological inspiration behind Fascist racist theories and explain their relationship with the Catholic Church and Nazi forms of racism. In particular, I argue that the disagreements about the racial identity of the Etruscan people are exemplary of the distinction between "biological" racism and anti-Christian, non-biological racism. The article thus shows that Alfred Rosenberg's negative representation of the Etruscans — aimed at denying the racial legitimacy of the Catholic Church — was adopted, in Italy, by anti-Christian Fascist philosophers such as Julius Evola and Giulio Cogni; the "biological" racist group behind the journal *La Difesa della Razza*, instead, promoted Eugen Fischer's "Etruscologist" theory of the "aquiline race" to include the Etruscans in Italian racial history and avoid an ideological struggle with the Church.
Key words: Fascism, Nazism, Nationalism, Racism, Etruscans, Catholicism

In 1994, Mauro Raspanti proposed a division into three sub-groups of the "racisms of Fascism" that had marked the years between 1938 and 1943: biological racism, national racism and esoteric-traditionalist racism.[1] This tripartition went against the historiographic bipartition that Renzo De Felice had theorised in 1961, namely between the Nazi's pseudo-scientific biological racism and Fascist spiritual-humanistic racism.[2] Compared to De Felice's approach, which was progressively contested precisely from the 1990s onwards,[3] Raspan-

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[1] Mauro Raspanti, *I razzismi del fascismo*, in Centro Furio Jesi (ed.), *La menzogna della razza*, Bologna, Grafis, 1994, pp. 73-91.

[2] Renzo De Felice, *Storia degli ebrei italiani sotto il fascismo*, Turin, Einaudi, 2005 (first edition 1961), pp. 392-393; Patrick Bernhard, *The great divide? Notions of racism in Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany: new answers to an old problem*, "Journal of Modern Italian Studies", 24, 1, 2019, pp. 97-114.

[3] See Michele Sarfatti, *Gli ebrei nell'Italia fascista. Vicende, identità, persecuzione*, Turin, Einaudi, 2018 (first edition 2000).

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ti's proposal highlighted the scientific and ideological divergences that had existed between the currents of Fascist racism, stressing their autonomy from the German models, and — at the same time — identifying different phases in their competition for hegemony over the management of racist and anti-Jewish cultural policies.[4] In this article, I aim to demonstrate that the case study of the Etruscans' origins can help identify the scientific and ideological inspiration behind the single racist currents of Fascist culture and explain their relationship with the Catholic Church and contemporary Nazi racism. In particular, I argue that the dissemination in Italy of an expression developed by the German anthropologist Eugen Fischer and used in the field of Etruscology, the "aquiline race", was one of the pro-Catholic tactics used by Guido Landra's racist group in its competition with Alfred Rosenberg's anti-Etruscan and anti-Christian theories, adopted in Italy by exponents of non-biological racism such as Giulio Cogni and Julius Evola.

In ancient and modern times, many doubts have arisen about the Etruscans' origins and language. Consequently, their identity has long been the subject of the most diverse ideological interpretations. Nineteenth-century writers, politicians and scientists analysed the Etruscan question in the spirit of the Risorgimento, in a variety of reflections on the origins of the Italian nation; already in this era, scholars used racialised, anthropological and craniological categories in their historical and scientific explorations of the Etruscans' identity, and taking a nationalist stance.[5] At the end of the nineteenth century, the issue entered a broader anthropological debate on the racial characteristics of the Italian nation, from which different interpretations emerged: while some considered the Etruscans to be an Aryan population, others thought they represented the Mediterranean race.[6] The debate continued during the

[4] See Aaron Gillette, *Racial Theories in Fascist Italy*, London, Routledge, 2002; Francesco Cassata, *"La Difesa della razza". Politica, ideologia e immagine del razzismo fascista*, Turin, Einaudi, 2008.

[5] Maria-Laurence Haack, *Alla ricerca dei crani etruschi: gli antropologi italiani e gli Etruschi (1841-1911)*, in Giuseppe Maria Della Fina (ed.), *Gli etruschi nella cultura e nell'immaginario del mondo moderno*, Rome, Quasar, 2017, pp. 105-130; Salvatore Rigione, *Sulle tracce di una mitografia italiana della razza nella rincorsa coloniale*, Pisa, Edizioni ETS, 2020, pp. 93-94; Edoardo Marcello Barsotti, *Race and Risorgimento: An unexplored chapter of Italian history*, "Journal of Modern Italian Studies", 25, 3, 2020, pp. 273-294.

[6] A well-known advocate of the first interpretation was Giosuè Carducci. See Laura Fournier-Finocchiaro, *Giosuè Carducci et la construction de la nation italienne*, Caen, Presses universitaires de Caen, 2006, pp. 60-76; Laura Fournier-Finocchiaro, *"Les sublimes idéaux de notre race": Carducci et le mythe aryen*, in Aurélien Aramini, Elena Bovo (eds.), *La pensée de la race en Italie. Du romantisme au fascisme*, Besançon, Presses universitaires de Franche-Comté, 2018, pp. 57-72; Mauro Raspanti, *"Noi, nobile razza ariana". Giosuè Carducci e il mito ariano*, "Razzismo & Modernità", 1, 1, January-June 2001, pp. 26-55. The main advocate of the second interpretation is Giuseppe Sergi: see Fedra Pizzato, *Per una storia antropologica della nazione. Giuseppe Sergi e il mito della razza mediterranea nella costruzione culturale dello stato unitario italiano e nella competizione politica europea (1880-1919)*, "Storia del pensiero

Fascist period, when the political evolution of nationalism and racism accompanied the institutionalisation of Etruscology and its development within the more general and pervasive Fascist myth of "Romanness".[7] Under the regime, the Italian Etruscologists dealt extensively with the question of the Etruscans' origins; although they failed to reach an agreement, they started from a shared nationalist approach that saw the Etruscans as a de facto Italic and racially Mediterranean population.[8] When, in the second half of the 1930s, Mussolini and the regime's leaders established an Aryan and anti-Semitic cultural policy, in parallel with the country's diplomatic and ideological convergence with Nazi Germany, the Etruscans too were used — like the entire history of Italy — in a range of racist discourses on antiquity that, depending on the ideological inspiration, either integrated them into an Italian Aryan identity or rejected them as a foreign body. Drawing on hitherto unexplored archival sources and scholarly work on the racist applications of Etruscan identity by Fascists and Nazis,[9] I will approach these uses of antiquity as an interpretative key that will enable me to reconstruct some aspects of the history of Fascist scientific racism.

politico", 4, 1, 2015, pp. 25-51; Marie-Laurence Haack, *Crani etruschi vs crani romani? Il fascismo e l'antropologia degli etruschi* in Paola Salvatori (ed.), *Il fascismo e la storia*, Pisa, Edizioni della Normale, 2020, pp. 31-50.

[7] On the relationship between racism and the myth of Romanness, see Paola Salvatori, *Razza romana*, in Andrea Giardina, Fabrizio Pesando (eds.), *Roma caput mundi. Una città tra dominio e integrazione*, Milan, Electa, 2012, pp. 277-286; Alessandro Pagliara (ed.), *Antichistica italiana e leggi razziali*, Parma, Athenaeum, 2020.

[8] Marie-Laurence Haack, Martin Miller (eds.), *La construction de l'étruscologie au début du Xxème siècle. Actes des journées d'études internationales des 2 et 3 décembre 2013, Amiens*, Bordeaux, Ausonius. 2015; Marie-Laurence Haack, Martin Miller (eds.), *Les Étrusques au temps du fascisme et du nazisme. Actes des journées d'études internationales des 22 et 24 décembre 2014 (Amiens)*, Bordeaux, Ausonius, 2016 *; Marie-Laurence Haack, Martin Miller* (eds.), *L'étruscologie dans l'Europe d'après-guerre. Actes des journées d'études internationales des 14 au 16 septembre 2015 (Amiens et Saint-Valéry-sur-Somme)*, Bordeaux, Ausonius, 2017.

[9] See Martin Miller, *Alfred Rosenberg, die Etrusker und die Romfrage*, in Marie-Laurence Haack, Martin Miller (eds.), *Les Étrusques au temps du fascisme et du nazisme*, cit., pp. 81-94; Marie-Laurence Haack, *The invention of the Etruscan "race". E. Fischer, nazi geneticist, and the Etruscans*, "Quaderni di Storia", 80, July-December 2014, pp. 256-261; Marie-Laurence Haack, *Les Étrusques dans l'idéologie national-socialiste. À propos du Mythe du XXe siècle d'Alfred Rosenberg*, "Revue historique", 2015, 1, pp. 149-170 ; Marie-Laurence Haack, *Tanaquil et les chemises noires et brunes*, Anabases", 24, 2016, pp. 93-106; Marie-Laurence Haack, *Rome contre Tusca: les Étrusques dans l'œuvre de Giulio Evola*, in Philippe Foro (ed.), *L'Italie et l'Antiquité* du Siècle des lumières à la chute du fascisme, Toulouse, Presses Universitaires du Midi, 2017, pp. 265-278; Martina Piperno, *L'antichità "crudele". Etruschi e Italici nella letteratura italiana del Novecento*, Rome, Carocci, 2020, pp. 53-55.

Julius Evola, Giulio Cogni and the anti-Etruscan influence of Alfred Rosenberg

As Marie-Laurence Haack and Martin Miller have observed,[10] the Nazi ideologist Alfred Rosenberg (1893-1946) contrasted the ancient Romans — considered racially Nordic — with the Etruscans of oriental origin. He did so in his work *Der Mythus des XX. Jahrhunderts*, written around 1925 and published in 1930, selling 1.3 million copies until 1944. In particular, Rosenberg gave a radically negative image of the Etruscans, denouncing the presence of two supposedly archetypal figures of their civilisation: the prostitute-sacerdote Tanaquil and the wizardlike figure of the haruspex, both accused of paedophilia, the ritual murder of children, human sacrifices, spreading superstitions based on the analysis of excrement, satanism, witchcraft and the worship of phallic symbols. The Nazi theorist also equated the Etruscans with the Jews, claiming that each considered itself a chosen people and that they differed from Greek and Indo-European cultures and were incapable of creating independently without imitating other cultures. This highly anti-Etruscan imagery drew inspiration directly from the work *Tusca*, published in 1922 by the German Indologist and Tibetologist Albert Grünwedel (1856-1935). Convinced that the Etruscan language derived from the Egyptian language, Grünwedel had sought to translate some important Etruscan texts, but he constantly ended up describing violent and obscene rituals.[11] Rosenberg believed in the reliability of Grünwedel's translations and used them to support one of the main arguments of his own work: that the Catholic Church had Etruscan and Jewish origins, and hence was racially and morally unrelated to the Aryan civilisation.[12] In fact, under the Nazi regime, Rosenberg joined the Deutsche Glaubensbewegung, a movement that united non-Christian and neopagan religions in Germany.[13] Another member of this organisation was the German anthropologist Hans Friedrich Karl Günther (1891-1968), who was politically linked to Rosenberg.[14] Close to the *völkisch* and neopagan movement, in the

[10] See M. Miller, *Alfred Rosenberg, die Etrusker und die Romfrage*, cit.; M.L. Haack, *Les Étrusques dans l'idéologie national-socialiste*, cit.; M.L. Haack, *Tanaquil et les chemises noires et brunes*, cit.

[11] M. Miller, *Alfred Rosenberg, die Etrusker und die Romfrage*, cit., pp. 82-84.

[12] M. Miller, *Alfred Rosenberg, die Etrusker und die Romfrage*, cit., pp. 81-94; Katarzyna Leszczyńska, *Hexen und Germanen. Das Interesse der Nationalsozialismus an der Geschichte der Hexenverfolgung*, Bielefeld, transcript, 2009, pp. 209-211.

[13] Édouard Conte, Cornelia Essner, *Culti di sangue. Antropologia del nazismo*, Rome, Carocci, 2000 (Italian translation, first edition 1995), pp. 36-37. See Roger Griffin, *Modernism and Fascism. The Sense of a Beginning under Mussolini and Hitler*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, p. 256; Karla Poewe, *New Religions and the Nazis*, New York-London, Routledge, 2006.

[14] É. Conte, C. Essner, *Culti di sangue*, cit., p. 64; Johann Chapoutot, *Le nazisme et l'Antiquité*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 2012 (first edition 2008), pp. 28-32.

1920s Günther became known as a theorist of Aryan racism, criticising the racial "denordification" (*Entnordung*) of the German people. Based on these positions, Günther polemicised against the nationalist and Catholic theorists of race, who advocated a German racial identity that was Lamarckian and not exclusively Nordic.[15] Günther, too, showed an interest in the Etruscans: in his 1929 book *Rassenkunde Europas*, he insisted on their oriental origins following his study of Etruscan funerary art and the craniological analyses by Giustiniano Nicolucci and Giuseppe Sergi. He concluded that the Etruscans' Mediterranean side had grown in the period of their political decadence, according to an approach that attributed the end of civilisation to the *Entnordung*. He next dwelled on the Etruscans' Middle Eastern nature, whose racial features were said to include an aptitude for trade, metalworking, superstition, cruelty and pederasty. Furthermore, Günther rejected the possibility that Dante, Giotto, Leonardo and Michelangelo could be considered heirs of the Etruscans.[16] Like Rosenberg, the German anthropologist took the most negative elements of his orientalist representation of the Etruscans from Grünwedel's *Tusca*.[17]

The anti-Etruscan and anti-Christian theories of Grünwedel, Rosenberg and Günther did not remain undisputed in Nazi Germany, especially in Catholic circles. Tensions rose between the Holy See and Nazism as they disagreed on the Catholics' political viability in Germany, compliance with the Concordat, Nazi eugenic policies, the Austrian question and the issue of racism and neopaganism, and on 7 February 1934, the Holy Office placed Rosenberg's *Mythus* on the Index.[18] Moreover, the Archbishop of Cologne (Karl Joseph Schulte) and — after his resignation — the Bishop of Münster (Clemens August von Galen) sponsored a working group of Catholic scholars coordinated by Wilhelm Neuss, a theologian and historian of the Catholic Church, in order to timely criticise the theses of the *Mythus*. The initiative resulted in the publication, at

[15] É. Conte, C. Essner, *Culti di sangue*, cit., pp. 57-82.

[16] Hans Friedrich Karl Günther, *Rassenkunde Europas*, München, Lechmann, 1929, pp. 161-164.

[17] H.F.K. Günther, *Rassenkunde Europas*, cit., p. 164n.

[18] See "La Civiltà Cattolica", LXXXV, 1934, 1, pp. 543-544; Raimund Baumgärtner, *Weltanschauungskampf im Dritten Reich. Die Auseinandersetzung der Kirchen mit Alfred Rosenberg*, Mainz, Matthias-Grunewald-Verlag, 1977; Barbara Raggi, Ruggero Taradel, *La segregazione amichevole. "La Civiltà Cattolica" e la questione ebraica 1850-1945*, Rome, Editori Riuniti, 2000; Peter Godman, *Hitler and the Vatican. Inside the secret archives that reveal the new story of the Nazis and the Church*, New York, Free Press, 2004, pp. 48-49; Hubert Wolf, *Il papa e il diavolo. Il Vaticano e il Terzo Reich*, Rome, Donzelli, 2008 (Italian translation), pp. 260-267; Tommaso Dell'Era, *Razza*, in Adriano Prosperi, Vincenzo Lavenia, John Tedeschi (eds.), *Dizionario storico dell'Inquisizione*, Pisa, Edizioni della Normale, 2010, vol. III, pp. 1300-1302; Dominik Burkard, *Die lehramtliche Verurteilung des "Mythus des 20. Jahrhunderts". Bestandteil einer kurialen Weltanschauungspolitik?*, in Raffaella Perin (ed.), *Pio XI nella crisi europea*, Venice, Edizioni Ca' Foscari, 2015, pp. 15-36.

the end of 1934, of a collection of *Studien zum Mythus des XX. Jahrhunderts*.[19] Drawing on theories developed in the field of Etruscology, this work criticised the negative representation of the Etruscans, emphasising the scientific unreliability of Grünwedel's ideas.[20] In response to Rosenberg, the Catholic scholars expressed an actual apologia for the Etruscans, itself based on racial categories:

> Now, more than ever, we are convinced of the influence of race on the formation of a people, its life and its works. If you wish to feel the Etruscan spirit, you must visit Florence! You will probably not find another city in Italy with a more pronounced character, and although it is difficult to trace the individual events and the works constructed here to the various racial, spiritual and generally cultural — or even accidental — influences, one can nonetheless see in the peculiarity of Florence something of the peculiarity of the Etruscan race. But where else can one find a stronger, more obstinate and lively people than in this city, capable of defeating emperors and popes thanks to its 50,000 inhabitants, simultaneously trades throughout the known world, has local craftsmanship, stubbornly tears itself apart in fratricidal wars, up to the point that the homes of the ancient and proud families are still forts and fortresses today, yet at the same time finds the spiritual strength and leisure time for cultural creations of the greatest importance?

The apologia concludes by claiming that the Florentines are still proud of their Tuscan and Roman past, and that Rosenberg is ultimately wrong.[21] On the question of the Etruscans' origins, the German Catholic scholars stress their doubts about Grünwedel and Rosenberg's convictions. At the same time, they seem to express a preference for the thesis of a northern — hence Aryan — origin of the Etruscans, citing numerous scholars of antiquity who support this theory and giving fewer citations in support of the orientalist thesis.[22] In reality, the Catholic preference for the Etruscans' northern origins clashes with Günther and Rosenberg's orientalist thesis, in the sense that it attributes an Indo-European racial identity to the Etruscans that is common to Greek, Roman and Germanic peoples. Hence, the pro-Etruscan response of Rosenberg's Catholic critics does not reflect an "anti-racist" stance, given that they share certain basic assumptions with the Nazis: the existence of races with their own physical and spiritual characteristics, a millennia-long continuity of these races, and the myth of the northern and Aryan origin of civilisation at large. What is really at stake, from an ideological point of view, is not racism but the Church's historical and racial evaluation, and thus the polit-

[19] M. Miller, *Alfred Rosenberg, die Etrusker und die Romfrage*, cit., pp. 85-87; R. Baumgärtner, *Weltanschauungskampf im Dritten Reich*, cit., pp. 154-168. On Von Galen, see H. Wolf, *Il papa e il diavolo*, cit., pp. 225-236.

[20] *Studien zum Mythus des XX. Jahrhunderts*, Köln, Bachem, 1935, pp. 8 e 8n. I am referring to the last edition of the *Studien*: R. Baumgärtner, *Weltanschauungskampf im Dritten Reich*, cit., p. 155 and pp. 156-157.

[21] *Studien zum Mythus des XX. Jahrhunderts*, cit., p. 10n. Translation mine.

[22] *Studien zum Mythus des XX. Jahrhunderts*, cit., p. 10. See K. Leszczyńska, *Hexen und Germanen*, cit., pp. 236-237.

ical legitimacy of Catholic action in German society. By defending the Etruscans from the negative portrayal of Grünwedel, Günther and Rosenberg, and by promoting the thesis of the Etruscans' northern origin, the Catholics fought Rosenberg's anti-clerical argument from the bottom up. The Nazi theorist responded to the criticism in 1935, reiterating Grünwedel's ideas and calling the Catholic scholars who criticised him "obscurantists" (*Dunkelmänner*).[23] The Holy Office condemned this intervention, too.[24] However, the Nazi ideologist had by then managed to capitalise on his role in the new regime; even before he was put on the Index, on 24 January 1934, he had been appointed Hitler's representative for the ideological supervision of the Nazi party and related associations.[25] In that same year, he also founded the so-called Amt Rosenberg, a cultural institute linked to the Nazi party that — inspired by the *Mythus* — financed racist research in the field of antiquity.[26]

Throughout 1934, as tensions over the Austrian question rose between Italy, the Holy See and Germany, Rosenberg's anti-Etruscan theories also received criticism in Fascist culture and from the Italian Catholics.[27] Moreover, any possibility of translating the *Mythus* into Italian was excluded.[28] Nevertheless, Rosenberg's ideas were promptly received in the thought of two Fascist philosophers with anti-Christian positions: Julius Evola and Giulio Cogni. From the 1920s onwards, Evola (1898-1974), in particular, became the spokesman of an esoteric traditionalism based on the Guénonian belief in an ancient tradition that Fascism should defend and restore to oppose the decadence of the West.[29] The Etruscans were initially included in this traditionalist identity. In 1927, in *Critica Fascista*, Evola proposed that Fascism poses itself as an "Anti-Europe", hence in an anti-democratic, anti-bourgeois and anti-Christian sense,

[23] M. Miller, *Alfred Rosenberg, die Etrusker und die Romfrage*, cit., p. 88. See Alfred Rosenberg, *An die Dunkelmänner unserer Zeit, eine Antwort auf die Angriffe gegen den "Mythus des 20. Jahrhunderts"*, München, Hoheneichen-Verlag, 1935.

[24] See "La Civiltà Cattolica" LXXXVI, 1935, 3, p. 318.

[25] M. Miller, *Alfred Rosenberg, die Etrusker und die Romfrage*, cit., p. 84; R. Baumgärtner, *Weltanschauungskampf im Dritten Reich*, cit., p. 154.

[26] See Reinhard Bollmus, *Das Amt Rosenberg und seine Gegner. Zum Machtkampf im nationalsozialistischen Herrschaftssystem*, Stuttgart, Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1970. Günther also adhered to the Amt Rosenberg: É. Conte, C. Essner, *Culti di sangue*, cit., p. 64.

[27] See T. Salvotti, *Razzismo religioso e politico*, "L'Universale", IV, 13-14, July 1934, p. 4; Guido Manacorda, *Rosenberg e il mito della razza*, "Il Frontespizio", November 1934, p. 3; M. Barbera S.I. [Mario Barbera], *Mito razzista anticristiano*, "La Civiltà Cattolica", LXXXV, 1934, 1, 3 February 1934, pp. 243-244.

[28] See Giorgio Fabre, *Il razzismo del duce. Mussolini dal ministero dell'Interno alla Repubblica sociale italiana*, Rome, Carocci, 2021, pp. 144-145.

[29] On Julius Evola, see Francesco Germinario, *Razza del sangue, razza dello spirito: Julius Evola, l'antisemitismo e il nazionalsocialismo, 1930-43*, Turin, Bollati Boringhieri, 2001; Francesco Cassata, *A destra del fascismo. Profilo politico di Julius Evola*, Turin, Bollati Boringhieri, 2003; Paul Furlong, *Social and Political Thought of Julius Evola*, London-New York, Routledge, 2011.

embodying "the resurrection of the archaic Mediterranean tradition, of that epic and magical tradition, older even than the Aryan [tradition], which derived from itself the Egyptian, Chaldean, Ancient Greek civilisation, and even more mysterious and remote ones, […], Sumerian, Etruscan, that of which Mycenae and the Balearic Islands bear the traces".[30] Evola thus takes up the definition of his collaborator Arturo Reghini, "pagan imperialism",[31] and formulates a "Mediterranean tradition" that would include the Etruscans, which he contrasts with a "Semitic tradition imported from the exotic soil of Palestine" and represented by Christianity.[32] In 1928, he developed these theories in an essay called precisely "Imperialismo pagano" (Pagan imperialism), where he indicated the need for Fascism to return to the "Mediterranean tradition". The enemies of traditionalism also included Christianity, which he considered in the Nietzschean sense of a religion of slaves: "[T]he greatest cause of the decline of the West", corrupter of the Roman Empire and then, in the Lutheran version, of the "race of blond Germanic barbarians".[33] Evola even placed Christianity at the basis of liberalism and socialism, characterising it racially as a "Semitic contamination".[34] Using almost the same words as in the article of 1927, the philosopher again placed the Etruscan civilisation among the original matrices of the "Mediterranean tradition" that Fascism was meant to restore.[35]

From at least 1930 onwards, though, Evola began to radically reconsider his thought in a highly anti-Etruscan sense, owing mainly to the influence of Rosenberg and the nineteenth-century Swiss historian and anthropologist Johann Jakob Bachofen, theorist of the "matriarchy" or "maternal right" (*Mutterrecht*) of the Etruscans, whom he considered oriental and opposed to the Romans, of Nordic origin.[36] In early 1930, Evola publicly expressed his interest in German racist theories.[37] In particular, he recorded a renewed interest in Bachofen, from whom he borrowed the opposition between uranic masculine and telluric feminine civilisations, and included the matriarchal Etruscans among the latter. According to Evola, "many elements" of Bachofen's "Etruscologist" interpretation were still valid in 1930, and in July of that year he published — in his journal, *La Torre* — a translated extract from

[30] Cited in F. Cassata, *A destra del fascismo*, cit., p. 30 (first edition "Critica Fascista", 15 June 1927).

[31] See Arturo Reghini, *Imperialismo pagano*, "Atanòr", I, 3 March 1924, pp. 69-95 (first edition "Salamandra", January-February 1914).

[32] Cited in F. Cassata, *A destra del fascismo*, cit., p. 33.

[33] Julius Evola, *Imperialismo pagano. Il fascismo dinanzi al pericolo euro-cristiano*, Todi-Rome, Atanòr, 1928, pp. 11-14.

[34] J. Evola, *Imperialismo pagano*, cit., p. 16.

[35] J. Evola, *Imperialismo pagano*, cit., p. 15.

[36] See Peter Davies, *Myth, Matriarchy and Modernity. Johann Jakob Bachofen in German Culture, 1860-1945*, Berlin-New York, De Gruyter, 2010.

[37] Julius Evola, *Aspetti del movimento culturale della Germania contemporanea*, "Nuova Antologia", 1 January 1930, pp. 83-97.

Bachofen's *Die Sage von Tanaquil* (1870), on the racial and cultural contrast between Etruscans and Romans.[38] In November 1930, Evola wrote a critical review of Rosenberg's recently published *Mythus*, preferring Bachofen's theories instead.[39] His objections to the author of the *Mythus* derived from a traditionalist assumption: in Evola's view, Rosenberg was still too nationalistic and open to industrial modernity, whereas a more explicit "revolt" was needed against the Anglo-Saxon, American and Semitic modern civilisations.[40] It is, then, possible to date the beginning of Evola's interest in German racism and anti-Etruscan theories to 1930. Referring to Rosenberg's *Mythus* and Bachofen, in 1932 Evola described the figure of the Etruscan queen Tanaquil as a "type of Semitic royal woman", considering the Etruscans matriarchal people,[41] and claiming that they practised a "chthonic-democratic plebeian religion" that was counterposed to Aryan cults.[42] The traditionalist philosopher also adopted Grünwedel's anti-Etruscan imagery, which he probably discovered through Rosenberg, attributing an "orgiastic, demonic and witch-like aspect" to the Etruscan religion. For these reasons, Evola presented the expulsion of the Tarquins from Rome as a Nordic aristocratic revolt against the democratic regime of the telluric Etruscans.[43] A demonstration of the influence of German racism and the consequent anti-Etruscan turn can be found in the German edition of "Pagan imperialism", published in 1933, where Evola eliminated the references to the "Mediterranean tradition" and to the Etruscans that he had made in 1927 and 1928. For the German public, Evola now spoke of an Aryan, "primordial Nordic-Solar tradition" and denounced the "semitisation" of the Greco-Roman Nordic world,[44] in a clear parallelism with German Aryan racism.

Evola's relationship with Rosenberg was not linear, as ideological influence alternated with distrust and criticism. In May 1934, after the Catholic Church had placed the *Mythus* on the Index, Evola defended Rosenberg by presenting him as "the principal theorist of the Nazi movement",[45] and wrote that his work contained "courageous ideas, which we sincerely appreciate, in the same way

[38] *La donna regale e la nascita di Roma*, "La Torre", I, 9, July 1930, pp. 6-7.

[39] Julius Evola, *Il "Mito" del nuovo Nazionalismo Tedesco*, "Vita Nova", VI, 11, November 1930, pp. 930-934. See Marie.Laurence Haack, *Rome contre Tusca*, cit.

[40] J. Evola, *Il "Mito" del nuovo Nazionalismo Tedesco*, cit., p. 933.

[41] Julius Evola, *Il simbolo aristocratico romano e la disfatta classica dell'Aventino*, in Julius Evola, *La nobiltà della stirpe (1932-1938). La difesa della razza (1939-1942)*, Rome, Fondazione Julius Evola, 2002, pp. 84-86 (first edition. "La nobiltà della stirpe", November -December 1932).

[42] J. Evola, *Il simbolo aristocratico romano*, cit., p. 87.

[43] J. Evola, *Il simbolo aristocratico romano*, cit., pp. 88-89.

[44] Julius Evola, *Heidnischer Imperialismus*, in Julius Evola, *Imperialismo pagano nelle edizioni italiana e tedesca*, Rome, Edizioni Mediterranee, 2004, pp. 193-199 (Italian translation, first edition 1933).

[45] Julius Evola, *La lotta nazionalsocialista per la "visione del mondo"*, "Bibliografia fascista", XII, 5, May 1934, p. 360.

that he took an interest in similar ideas that we had defended in Italy".[46] For his part, Evola advocated an aristocratic, imperialist and racist political ideal, criticising the more "Jacobin" (i.e. nationalist and populist) aspects of Nazism. For this reason, he hoped that Rosenberg would not give in to political compromises and impose his anti-Christianism on Germany without reducing his racism to a biological matter.[47] However, the private information that the political police had gathered seems to suggest that Evola doubted Rosenberg's actual revolutionary force; in June 1934, that is, a month after publishing the article, Evola expressed his disappointment with Nazi neopaganism, which he still considered too nationalistic.[48] The following year, Evola hoped that Rosenberg would be able to rid himself of his ideological errors and materialist tendencies, a condition he considered to be the basis of any "fruitful cultural collaboration".[49]

Caught between sympathy for and mistrust of Rosenberg, from 1932 onwards, Evola integrated the anti-Etruscan theories of Bachofen, Grünwedel and Rosenberg himself into his essays and journalistic publications, where he exalted the Nordic Aryan race: in *Rivolta contro il mondo moderno* (Revolt against the modern world, 1934),[50] in his column "Diorama Filosofico" for *Il Regime Fascista*,[51] in *Il mito del sangue* (The myth of the blood, 1937),[52] where he contested the historical-religious and irrationalist studies of Eugenio Giovannetti and Giovanni Antonio Colonna di Cesarò,[53] in Giovanni Preziosi's journal *La Vita Italiana*,[54] in *La Difesa della Razza*,[55]

[46] J. Evola, *La lotta nazionalsocialista per la "visione del mondo"*, cit., p. 363.

[47] J. Evola, *La lotta nazionalsocialista per la "visione del mondo"*, cit., p. 365.

[48] Information dated June 1934, in ACS, Ministero dell'Interno, Direzione Generale Pubblica Sicurezza, Divisione polizia politica, Fascicoli personali (1926-1944), b. 467, f. "Evola Jules-Giulio Cesare".

[49] Julius Evola, *Paradossi dei tempi: paganesimo nazista = illuminismo liberale*, "Lo Stato", VI, 7, July 1935, p. 531.

[50] Julius Evola, *Rivolta contro il mondo moderno*, Milan, Hoepli, 1934, pp. 343, sg.

[51] Julius Evola, *Roma contro Tusca*, "Il Regime Fascista", 15 March 1935.

[52] Julius Evola, *Il mito del sangue*, Milan, Hoepli, 1937, pp. 171-172. Evola explains Rosenberg's ideas on the Etruscans to the Italian audience at pages 184-186.

[53] Julius Evola, *Cesare vivo?*, "Lo Stato", IX, 2, February 1938, pp. 103-107; Julius Evola, *Sulla storia "sotterranea" di Roma*, "La vita italiana", February 1939, pp. 191-200.

[54] Julius Evola, *Guerra occulta nell'antichità. Roma, i "Libri Sibillini" e l'ebraismo*, "La vita italiana", September 1939, pp. 313-319 (see Julius Evola, *I libri sibillini*, "La Difesa della razza", 5 February 1941); Julius Evola, *Circa lo spirito della civiltà romana*, "La vita italiana", December 1940, p. 611n. Here, on his own negative interpretation of the Etruscans, Evola refers to *Rivolta contro il mondo moderno*, although he admits that "similar ideas, albeit in a predominantly political use (in the bad, modern sense of the word)" can be found in Rosenberg's *Mythus.*

[55] Julius Evola, *Simboli eroici della tradizione ario-romana. L'Ascia*, in J. Evola, *La nobità della stirpe (1932-1938). La difesa della razza (1939-1942)*, cit., pp. 239-241 (first edition "La Difesa della razza", 5 November 1940); Julius Evola, *Panorama razziale dell'Italia preromana*, in J. Evola, *La nobità della stirpe (1932-1938). La difesa della razza (1939-1942)*, cit., p. 291 (first edition in "La Difesa della razza", 20 June 1941).

in *Sintesi di dottrina della razza* (Synthesis of the doctrine of race, 1941),[56] and in his negative reviews of the works of the Etruscologists Pericle Ducati and Massimo Pallottino.[57] Starting at least in 1934, Evola forged contacts with Nazi racism networks and exponents of the Austrian and German conservative right,[58] intervening in the German-language debate and acting as the promoter of a German-Italian, anti-Semitic and anti-communist convergence.[59] Between 1937 and 1938, Evola joined the Ahnenerbe institute founded by Walter Wüst and Heinrich Himmler, who — after some hesitation — accepted his collaboration.[60] In Italy, by contrast, the Ministry of Popular Culture ignored Evola's offers of availability at least until the summer of 1941,[61] while the political police continued monitoring his political and cultural ties to Germany.[62]

However, in the Fascist context of the 1930s, another supporter of Rosenberg's anti-Etruscan and anti-Christian theories emerged, initially destined to obtain a greater political success than Evola. In September 1935, at the beginning of the diplomatic convergence between Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany, Mussolini sent the consul Gino Scarpa to Germany. The mission included talks with Walter Gross, head of the Nazi party's Rassenpolitisches Amt,[63] who would later declare that he and the consul had come to "a complete agreement on the fundamental principles" and that the Italian side had expressed a willingness to "introduce the biological racist approach in the Italian way of thinking and science". Giulio Cogni (1908-1983), a philosophy professor from Siena and follower of Giovanni Gentile's actual idealism, active first in France and then in Germany, was nominated for this initiative.[64] In fact, between 1934

[56] Julius Evola, *Sintesi di dottrina della razza*, Milan, Hoepli, 1941, pp. 156-160, 232.

[57] Julius Evola, *Recensione di P. Ducati, "Come nacque Roma"*, "Bibliografia fascista", March 1941, pp. 208-210; Julius Evola, *Recensione di M. Pallottino, "Etruscologia"*, "Bibliografia fascista", June 1942, pp. 397-400.

[58] Hans-Jürgen Lutzhöft, *Der Nordische Gedanke in Deutschland. 1920-1940*, Stuttgart, Klett, 1971, pp. 272-273; F. Cassata, *A destra del fascismo*, cit., p. 163.

[59] Horst Junginger, *From Buddha to Adolf Hitler: Walther Wüst and the aryan tradition*, in Horst Junginger (ed.), *The Study of Religion under the Impact of Fascism*, Leiden-Boston, Brill, 2008, pp. 127, sg.

[60] Horst Junginger, *From Buddha to Adolf Hitler*, cit., p. 133.

[61] Alfieri's disapproval of Evola's initiatives in Germany in July 1937; letter from Alfieri to Evola of 26 January 1939; letter from Pavolini to Bottai of 6 January 1941, in ACS, Ministero della Cultura Popolare, Gabinetto, Affari generali, b. 121, fasc. 759 "EVOLA Julius".

[62] Report of 19 January 1939 by the political police; report of 20 October 1939 by the political police, in ACS, Ministero dell'Interno, Direzione Generale Pubblica Sicurezza, Divisione polizia politica, Fascicoli personali (1926-1944), b. 467, fasc. "Evola Jules — Giulio Cesare".

[63] On Walter Gross and his office, see Claudia Koonz, *The Nazi conscience*, Cambridge, Mass., The Belknap Press of Harvars University Press, 2003; G. Fabre, *Il razzismo del duce*, cit., pp. 139-140.

[64] F. Cassata, *"La Difesa della razza"*, cit., p. 25. On Giulio Cogni, see Tommaso Dell'Era, *Giulio Cogni*, in A. Prosperi, V. Lavenia, J. Tedeschi (eds.), *Dizionario storico dell'Inquisizione*, cit., vol. I, pp. 343-346; Tommaso Dell'Era, *Giulio Cogni in Germania: il razzismo italiano tra*

and 1935, Cogni gained notoriety as a keen observer of German racism for the anti-Semitic and racist newspapers founded by Telesio Interlandi (1894-1965), *Il Tevere* and *Quadrivio*. In the *Quadrivio*, he proposed an idealist and anti-positivist racism,[65] whereas in *Nuovi studi di diritto, economia e politica* — the journal of another follower of Gentile, the philosopher Ugo Spirito — he expressed an interest in "Nordic racism" and the anti-Semitic and anti-Christian positions within Nazism, clarifying that he was mainly referring to Houston Stewart Chamberlain and Alfred Rosenberg.[66] After the conquest of Ethiopia, Cogni intensified his collaboration with Interlandi, claiming the interest of Fascist racism in Italian colonial policy and explicitly stating that he shared the ideas conveyed in Rosenberg's *Mythus*.[67]

Giulio Cogni indeed proved to be an attentive reader of Rosenberg's and Günther's theories. In 1935, he gave the Italian public an account of German religious developments during Nazism, stating that he was in favour of the Deutsche Glaubensbewegung. While criticising the definition of this current as "neopaganism", he proposed an Italian application through the recovery of ancient Roman religiosity.[68] At this time, Telesio Interlandi introduced Cogni to Mussolini and the leaders of Fascist political culture, who were beginning to prepare the anti-Jewish persecution: the plan for collaboration with Dino Alfieri, the Minister of Popular Culture, dates back to 1936.[69] In his articles of this period, gathered in 1937 in an essay titled "I valori della stirpe italiana" (The values of the Italian race), Cogni asserted that — from a racial point of view — Italy represented a "*Nordic-Mediterranean* synthesis",[70] and he rejected Giuseppe Sergi's Mediterranean race theory.[71] He instead preferred the Nordicism of Günther, previously equated with a "Nordic Lombroso",[72] although he maintained the original affinity between Nordic and Mediterranean people.[73] In the appendix, he reproduced a paper by Günther on the common Nordic origin of the Italians, the Germans and the ancient Greeks,[74]

Ministero degli Esteri e Ministero per la Stampa e la Propaganda I, "Giornale di Storia", 25, 2017; Tommaso Dell'Era, *Giulio Cogni in Germania: il razzismo italiano tra Ministero degli Esteri e Ministero per la Stampa e la Propaganda II*, "Giornale di Storia", 26, 2018.

[65] Giulio Cogni, *Razza e sangue*, "Quadrivio", II, 22, 25 March 1934, pp. 1-2.

[66] Giulio Cogni, *Il mito del sangue nordico e Rosenberg*, "Nuovi studi di diritto, economia e politica", VII, 4-5, July -October 1934, pp. 304-319.

[67] See Giulio Cogni, *Razza*, "Quadrivio", IV, 38, 19 July 1936, pp. 1-2; Giulio Cogni, *Mito del XX secolo*, "Quadrivio", IV, 45, 6 September 1936, p. 1.

[68] Giulio Cogni, *La nuova religione tedesca*, "Quadrivio", VIII, 4-6, July-December 1935, pp. 271-278.

[69] F. Cassata, "*La Difesa della razza"*, cit., pp. 24, sg.

[70] Giulio Cogni., *I valori della stirpe italiana*, Milan, Bocca, 1937, pp. VII-VIII.

[71] G. Cogni, *I valori della stirpe italiana*, cit., pp. 23-30.

[72] G. Cogni, *Il mito del sangue nordico e Rosenberg*, cit., p. 311.

[73] G. Cogni, *I valori della stirpe italiana*, cit., pp. 39, sg.

[74] G. Cogni, *I valori della stirpe italiana*, cit., pp. 159-174.

and he demonstrates that he was also familiar with Evola's *Rivolta contro il mondo moderno*.[75]

Drawing on Günther and Rosenberg, Cogni developed his own negative and anti-Christian interpretation of the Etruscans, whom he considered oriental and alien to the Nordic race.[76] He elaborated his evaluation of Etruscan civilisation in his book *Il Razzismo* (Racism), published in 1936 but conceived in previous years as an account of the main German theories and idealistic interpretations of racism, which he had discussed directly with Giovanni Gentile himself.[77] Although he again referred to Nazi racism, the Deutsche Glaubensbewegung and Rosenberg,[78] Cogni lamented the fact that, in Germany, racism had been framed in an anthropological and positivist sense, whereas its spiritual objectives had been delegated to scientists.[79] He remained cautious, though, about the potential Italian applications of Nazi racism. Thus, he wrote that the Jews in Italy were few and integrated into the nation: "[H]ere, leaving aside religious reasons, a Jewish question can no longer exist."[80] He went on to analyse ancient history, making a distinction between "Nordic or solar" and "Semitic and Semitising" civilisations, among which he included that of the Etruscans. From this perspective, Semitic civilisations would be characterised by passivity, fanaticism and an instinctive nature, "the supremacy of subterranean realms, of unbridled passion, [and] worship of mysterious transcendent powers". Cogni also quoted Bachofen when he argued that these were matriarchal civilisations.[81] In particular, he considered the Etruscan people "spiritually inferior", "related to Middle Eastern civilisations" and devoted exclusively to luxury and vice. Here, Cogni underlined the non-Indo-European character of the Etruscan language; he added that, "having disappeared as a race, these people mixed with the other Italic peoples, slightly corrupting their purity" until the victory of the northern Romans over the Etruscans allowed the rise of Rome.[82] Cogni furthermore quoted Rosenberg on the Semitic and Etruscan origins of Catholic religiosity, locating the roots of medieval spirituality and witchcraft in the activities of the Etruscan haruspices.[83] In this way, the Etruscans could be considered Semitic and matriarchal, and linked to a mysterious and negative image with an anti-Semitic and anti-Christian function. Consid-

[75] G. Cogni, *I valori della stirpe italiana*, cit., p. 112.

[76] G. Cogni, *I valori della stirpe italiana*, cit., pp. 211-212n e 224-226.

[77] T. Dell'Era, *Giulio Cogni*, cit.

[78] Giulio Cogni, *Il Razzismo*, Milan, Bocca, 1937 (first edition 1936), pp. 86, sg. The 1937 reprint differs from the first version — which was already circulating in 1936 — only in the introduction: See Giovanni Rota, *Intellettuali, dittatura, razzismo di Stato*, Milan, FrancoAngeli, 2008, p. 27 n.

[79] G. Cogni, *Il Razzismo*, cit., p. 109.

[80] G. Cogni, *Il Razzismo*, cit., p. 158.

[81] G. Cogni, *Il Razzismo*, cit., pp. 178-179.

[82] G. Cogni, *Il Razzismo*, cit., p. 189.

[83] G. Cogni, *Il Razzismo*, cit., p. 205.

ering his submissive reception of Rosenberg's anti-Etruscan theories, in this phase Cogni should be considered — alongside Evola — as one of the main Italian supporters of the German racist theories that the Fascist leaders were following with interest.

The main obstacle to the racist cultural policy that Mussolini intended to entrust to Cogni came from the Catholic Church's reaction to German racism, as had happened in 1934 and 1935. Not unlike Rosenberg's and Evola's theories, the negative representation of the Etruscans that Cogni promoted effectively contributed to denying the racial legitimacy of Catholicism. Three months after Pope Pius XI's encyclical "Mit brennender Sorge", aimed at denouncing the anti-Christian tendencies of Nazism at the height of the tensions between the Holy See and the German regime,[84] in June 1937 the Holy Office placed Cogni's *Il Razzismo* on the Index, condemning it for being "full of Rosenberg's ideas" and "the first attempt of Germanic racism to also enter the ranks of Fascism".[85] From Germany, the Aryanists openly supported Cogni, while his writings were hosted by Günther's journal, *Rasse*.[86] Faced with the Church's resistance, Mussolini nevertheless chose not to use Cogni for the political and cultural definition of Fascist racism after all. Consequently, the philosopher's political success waned and the regime's interest in him declined.[87]

La Difesa della Razza and the reception of Eugen Fischer's "Etruscologist" theory

Following another mediation attempt by Interlandi, at the beginning of 1938 Mussolini and the Minister of Popular Culture Alfieri invited the young anthropologist Guido Landra (1913-1980) to prepare an Aryan and anti-Semitic cultural policy that was no longer inspired by Rosenbergian and potentially anti-Christian theories, as in the case of Cogni, but based on a scientific and Mendelian heredity approach.[88] From the outset, this new approach was marked by a general openness to the Etruscan identity as a propaganda tool. Between February and June 1938, Landra prepared 10 propaganda points drawing on Mussolini and Alfieri's indications, in collaboration with a

[84] Giovanni Miccoli, *I dilemmi e i silenzi di Pio XII. Vaticano, Seconda guerra mondiale e Shoah*, Milan, Rizzoli, 2000, p. 159; R. Taradel, B. Raggi, *La segregazione amichevole*, cit., p. 73; H. Wolf, *Il papa e il diavolo*, cit., pp. 279-287; Fabrice Bouthillon, Marie Levant (eds.), *Pie XI. Un pape contre le nazisme? L'encyclique Mit brennender Sorge*, Brest, Éditions Dialogues, 2016.

[85] G. Miccoli, *I dilemmi e i silenzi di Pio XII*, cit., p. 28; F. Cassata, *"La Difesa della razza"*, cit., p. 29; T. Dell'Era, *Giulio Cogni*, cit.

[86] H.J. Lutzhöft, *Der Nordische Gedanke in Deutschland*, cit., pp. 273-274.

[87] F. Cassata, *"La Difesa della razza"*, cit., pp. 29-30.

[88] A. Gillette, *Racial Theories in Fascist Italy*, cit., pp. 66-68; F. Cassata, *"La Difesa della razza"*, cit., p. 38.

committee that also included the anthropologist Lidio Cipriani, a scholar of Etruscan craniology.[89] A member of the Fascist party, Cipriani was an assistant professor of anthropology at the University of Florence and director of the National Museum of Anthropology and Ethnology in the same city.[90] The proposals that Cipriani sent Landra for the racist propaganda — meant to convince the "simplest minds" by "striking their imagination and possibly their hearts" — also contained Etruscan material: a photo of an Etruscan bust from the third century BC, excavated in Orvieto, which resembled "the Mother of Our Sovereign". Cipriani wrote that it was necessary "to lead the simplest minds to connect, at a glance, the racial characteristics of the ancient peoples of Italy with those of today, and to understand how they have remained unchanged over the millennia".[91] The Etruscans were therefore included in the racist projects of Guido Landra's group, which did not reproduce Rosenberg's anti-Etruscan and anti-Christian theory.

Already in February 1938, Mussolini ordered Landra to set up "a scientific committee for the study and organisation of the racial campaign"; in June, it was called the "Study office", and subsequently the "Race office" of the Ministry of Popular Culture, of which Landra was put in charge.[92] Along with the publication — on 14 July 1938 — of the Aryan and biological handbook that would later become known as the "Manifesto della razza" (Manifesto of Race) as well as the launch of Telesio Interlandi's fortnightly *La Difesa della Razza*,[93] on 5 August, Landra's direction of the Race office marked the hegemony of "biological" racism over the cultural policy of Fascist racism.[94]

[89] Lidio Cipriani, *Su alcuni crani etruschi della Marsiliana*, "Studi Etruschi", I, 1927, pp. 391-405; Comitato Permanente per l'Etruria (Ente per le Attività Toscane), *Atti del primo congresso internazionale etrusco*, Florence, Rinascimento del libro, 1929, p. 264; Lidio Cipriani, *Struttura e proporzioni degli arti in scheletri di tombe etrusche*, "Studi Etruschi", III, 1929, p. 368. On Lidio Cipriani see Francesco Surdich, *Cipriani, Lidio*, in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, Rome, Istituto dell'Enciclopedia Italiana, 1981, vol. 25; Orlando Paris, *Il discorso scientifico e la costruzione dell'altro. Il razzismo biologico di Lidio Cipriani*, Pisa, Pacini, 2017.

[90] Memo on Cipriani's CV, in ACS, Ministero della Cultura Popolare, Gabinetto, Affari generali, b. 151, fasc. 1026 "Ufficio Razza. Fascicoli di collaboratori", s.fasc. "Cipriani Lidio, Firenze"; Sandra Puccini, *L'Antropologia a Roma tra Giuseppe e Sergio Sergi*, "Rivista di Antropologia", LXXI, 2, 1993, p. 239.

[91] Allegato III, in ACS, Ministero della Cultura Popolare, Gabinetto, Affari generali, b. 151, fasc. 1026 "Ufficio Razza. Fascicoli di collaboratori", s.fasc. "Cipriani Lidio, Firenze".

[92] F. Cassata, *"La Difesa della razza"*, cit., p. 38.

[93] See R. De Felice, *Storia degli ebrei italiani sotto il fascismo*, cit., pp. 555-556.

[94] M. Raspanti, *I razzismi del fascismo*, cit.; Giorgio Israel, Pietro Nastasi, *Scienza e razza nell'Italia fascista*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1998; Aaron Gillette, *The origins of the 'Manifesto of racial scientists'*, "Journal of Modern Italian Studies", 6, 2001, 3, pp. 305-323, Aaron Gillette, *Guido Landra and the office of racial studies in fascist Italy*, "Holocaust and genocide studies", 3, 2002, pp. 357-375; A. Gillette, *Racial theories in fascist Italy*, cit.; Roberto Maiocchi, *Scienza e fascismo*, Rome, Carocci, 2004; F. Cassata, *"La Difesa della razza"*, cit.; Giorgio Israel, *Il fascismo e la razza. La scienza e le politiche razziali del regime*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2010;

Cogni wrote to the Race office, offering to translate Rosenberg's *Mythus* into Italian. On 17 November 1938, the Race office wrote to the Minister of Popular Culture advising against the offer. The letter in question is particularly helpful to reconstruct the relations between the factions of Italian racism, the German factions and the Catholic Church.

> A translation in Italian of Rosenberg's Myth of the twentieth century is not recommended for various reasons.
> Sure enough, while containing important chapters on various aspects of racial issues, Rosenberg's book is in essence the most striking attack that the Catholic Church has suffered since Luther. Its translation, at a time when the Fascist racial policy is in full swing, could lead us into very dangerous territory.

The Race office openly advised against the translation of the *Mythus* and the collaboration with Cogni to preserve the political balance on which the consensus around Fascist racism was based:

> [T]he ultimate consequence would be an open struggle between the Regime and the Church in Italy.
> Even those Catholic sectors that have until now made a clear distinction between Italian and German racism would fatally develop a hostile attitude towards us.

Furthermore, the letter reveals an understanding of the internal composition of German racism: "It should also be added that, in Germany, the ideas of the Rosenberg Myth currently do not fully identify with the direction nowadays given to that racial policy but rather represent a trend, the importance of which has declined in recent times."[95] Landra and his "biological" collaborators therefore showed an awareness of the balances that had to be taken into account within Italian society. Italian "biological" racists, too, kept Rosenberg's ideas — already criticised in Nazi Germany — at a distance in the name of a compromise with the more nationalist "Catholic sectors" that had adhered to Fascist racism, which could never accept the influence of anti-Christian theories. The same political concerns may explain the reticence of the Ministry of Popular Culture, in the same period, to accept Evola's offers of collaboration prior to the summer of 1941, and then again when the philosopher — in collaboration with Alberto Luchini — managed to get closer to Mussolini after the spring of 1942.[96] In particular, it was Dino Alfieri — the coordinator of the "Manifesto della razza" — who intervened on several occasions to distance

Annalisa Capristo, *Scienze e razzismo*, in Francesco Cassata, Claudio Pogliano (eds.), *Storia d'Italia. Annali 26, Scienze e cultura dell'Italia unita*, Turin, Einaudi, 2011, pp. 241-263; G. Fabre, *Il razzismo del duce*, cit., pp. 172-181.

[95] Letter from the Race office to the minister of 17 November 1938, in ACS, Ministero della Cultura Popolare, Gabinetto, Affari generali, b. 151, fasc. 1026 "Ufficio Razza. Fascicoli di collaboratori", s.fasc. "Prof. Cogni Giulio. Siena".

[96] M. Raspanti, *I razzismi del fascismo*, cit.; F. Cassata, *"La Difesa della razza"*, cit., p. 98.

himself from Evola and his ideas,[97] first as a minister and then as Italian ambassador to the Holy See and Berlin.[98] This confirms the concern of the promoters of Fascist biological racism to maintain a balance between the positions of the Catholic Church and those of the Nazis.

The Etruscans were, then, caught in the rivalry between racist factions, representing an element of ideological division and a symbol of the racists' relationship with Catholicism. In the course of its five years of activity (1938-1943), *La Difesa della Razza* published numerous articles on Etruscan themes that — except for Evola's writings for the journal — all aimed at integrating the Etruscans into Italian racial identity, without accepting the anti-Christian implications of Rosenberg's anti-Etruscan theories.[99] Most of them tended to support the inclusion of the Etruscans in the Aryan race, or at least in a "Mediterranean" version of it: this was the case of the contributions by Arrigo Solmi, Minister of Grace and Justice,[100] Francesco Callari,[101] Emilio Villa,[102] Armando Tosti,[103] Paolo Guidotti,[104] Paolo Rubiu,[105] Ugo Rellini,[106] Massimo Scaligero,[107] and Aldo Modica.[108] The journal's editorial secretary, Giorgio Almirante, was also interested in the Etruscans; he had already promoted racist and anti-Semitic articles on ancient Rome in *La Difesa della Razza*,[109] as well as the slogan that presented racism as a "nationalism enhanced by five hundred per

[97] Alfieri's disapproval of Evola's initiatives in Germany in July 1937; letter from Alfieri to Evola of 26 January 1939; letter from Pavolini to Bottai of 6 January 1941; reply from Celso Luciano to Alfieri of 9 September 1941, in ACS, Ministero della Cultura Popolare, Gabinetto, Affari generali, b. 121, f. 759 "EVOLA Julius".

[98] See Pietro Pastorelli, *Alfieri, Edoardo (Dino)*, in *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani*, Rome, Istituto dell'Enciclopedia Italiana, 1988, vol. 34.

[99] See Julius Evola, *La nobiltà della stirpe (1932-1938). La difesa della razza (1939-1942)*, Fondazione Julius Evola, Rome, 2002.

[100] Arrigo Solmi, *L'unità etnica della nazione italiana nella storia*, "La Difesa della razza", I, 1, 5 August 1938, pp. 8-11.

[101] Francesco Callari, *Perché ariani*, "La Difesa della razza", I, 4, 20 September 1938, p. 20.

[102] Emilio Villa, *Arianità della lingua etrusca*, "La Difesa della razza", I, 5, 5 October 1938, p. 20.

[103] Armando Tosti, *Gli Ebrei e la morale borghese*, "La Difesa della razza", I, 6, 20 October 1938, p. 60.

[104] Paolo Guidotti, *Cesare Balbo strenuo difensore della razza*, "La Difesa della razza", II, 6, 20 January 1939, p. 28.

[105] Paolo Rubiu, *Gente sarda antisemita*, "La Difesa della razza", II, 10, 20 March 1939, p. 31.

[106] Ugo Rellini, *Continuità della razza e della cultura primitiva in Italia*, "La Difesa della razza", II, 2, 20 November 1938, pp. 15-17.

[107] Massimo Scaligero, *Omogeneità e continuità della razza italiana*, "La Difesa della razza", II, 15, 5 June 1939, pp. 38-40; Massimo Scaligero, *Il volto autentico della civiltà mediterranea*, "La Difesa della razza", V, 18, 20 July 1942, pp. 14-16.

[108] Aldo Modica, *La scrittura e la razza italica*, "La Difesa della razza", III, 8, 20 February 1940, pp. 38-41.

[109] Giorgio Almirante, *L'editto di Caracalla. Un semibarbaro spiana la via ai barbari*, "La Difesa della razza", I, 1, 5 August 1938, pp. 27-29; Giorgio Almirante, *Roma antica e i giudei*, "La Difesa della razza", I, 3, 5 September 1938, pp. 27-30.

cent".[110] He next discussed Littoria and the Agro Pontino, in a series of articles that offered a racial analysis of the Italian regions. After arguing that a new race was being born in the Pontine colonies, he suggested that the Volscians and Etruscans had already drained the Pontine plain by founding Terracina: "The first drainage works, the remnants of which are still visible today, should be attributed to the Etruscans. In fact, the Etruscans have a reputation for being excellent drainers; in Tuscany, too, there are traces of similar works by these people." Almirante is referring to the ancient historian Dionysius of Halicarnassus, the theorist of the Italic autochthony of the Etruscans, to the local historian Arturo Bianchini, to Karl Julius Beloch and to Gaetano De Sanctis, a supporter of the thesis of the Etruscans' northern origin. The claim of an Etruscan technical heritage clearly went hand in hand with the Etruscans' inclusion in the Italian racial identity. Nevertheless, Almirante argued that Rome eventually brought about the Aryan, racial unification of Italy.[111] Moreover, in 1942, the editors of *La Difesa della Razza* reported a discussion with a reader about the Etruscans. The "camerata" Piero Sapori, from the Ligurian city of Imperia, asked for an opinion on the issue cover of another journal, the *Rivista di studi liguri* (published by the International Institute of Ligurian Studies in Bordighera). The cover depicted a map of Italy in the sixth century BC where the Germans were indicated as occupying the entire Po valley, while the Ligurians were confined to the area of present-day Liguria. The editors replied that this was an inaccurate representation because the Po Valley had been colonised by the Etruscans before the arrival of the Celts: "The Etruscans remained in the Po Valley pushing north until the beginning of the fifth century BC, and many inscriptions bear witness to this." They thus conveyed an autochthonic conception of the Etruscans, who were believed to come from central Italy, not from the north. In fact, the editors added that the Etruscans — unlike the Italic peoples — were not part of the "Indo-European peoples", and cited the works of scholars such as Patroni, Brizio, Ducati, Pallottino and Devoto, who all confirmed Giuseppe Micali's nineteenth-century ideas. Despite the preference for autochthonism over the northern origin thesis, this position again clearly advocated the Etruscans' inclusion within the Italian nation and race.[112]

Other than publishing pro-Etruscan interventions, *La Difesa della Razza* also promoted an editorial line aimed at explicitly disseminating anthropological studies that integrated the Etruscans into the Italian racial identity. This is the case of the programmatic reception and discussion of Eugen Fischer's "Etruscologist" theory, whose analysis can offer a useful perspective on the

[110] Giorgio Almirante, *Né con 98 né con 998*, "La Difesa della razza", I, 6, 20 October 1938, p. 48.

[111] Giorgio Almirante, *Viaggio razziale per l'Italia. Littoria e l'Agro Pontino*, "La Difesa della razza", III, 12, 20 April 1940, pp. 17-18.

[112] *Questionario*, "La Difesa della razza", VI, 4, 20 December 1942, p. 22.

scientific inspiration behind Fascist biological racism and the Guido Landra group's political tactics concerning the Catholic Church.

Eugen Fischer (1874-1967) was a doctor, anthropologist and eugenicist, and one of the leading exponents of German scientific racism in the 1930s. His 1908 study on the "Rehoboth bastards" in Germany's African colonies had earned him the reputation of being a supporter of Mendelian hereditarianism in the field of interbreeding between human races. After the First World War and until 1926, he had been a member of the right-wing nationalist party Deutschnationale Volkspartei, participating in the politically transversal movement of racial hygiene. In 1926, he became the director of the new Kaiser-Wilhelm-Institut für Anthropologie, menschliche Erblehre und Eugenik, which was launched on 1 October 1927 to coordinate interdisciplinary research aimed at implementing eugenic state policies. In this context, Fischer had tried to remain independent from politics by collaborating with Catholic, Protestant and nationalist eugenicists. Nevertheless, he exposed himself as a critic of Hans Friedrich Karl Günther's Nordicist racism, not unlike his student Karl Saller,[113] a doctor and member of the Nazi SA as well as a nationalist theorist of the racial classification of all Germans into a homogeneous *deutsche Rasse*.[114] A Catholic from southern Germany, Fischer defined himself as a prototype of the Dinaric race and also theorised that the Germans belonged to a Germanic race that was not exclusively Nordic.[115] Yet, despite his disagreements with Günther, Fischer also collaborated with him, sharing an interest in the racist theories of Gobineau and Chamberlain and showing an ability to maintain links with all political factions.[116] After the Nazis seized power, Fischer tried to maintain margins of scientific autonomy, criticising the absolute value of racial purity and making anthropological distinctions between Eastern Jews, whom he considered inferior, and Western Jews.[117]

Having become the target of controversy in 1933 and 1934, contemporaneously with the controversy between nationalists and Nordicists within Nazi racism,[118] Fischer eventually aligned himself with the new regime and anti-Semitism, continuing to direct the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Institut under the political supervision of Walter Gross, head of the Rassenpolitisches Amt. From this moment onwards, the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Institut took on a central role in the Nazis' racial and eugenic policy, training doctors and SS men in scientific matters, advising the regime and spreading eugenic propaganda. Thanks

[113] Hans-Walter Schmuhl, *The Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for anthropology, human heredity and eugenics, 1927-1945. Crossing boundaries*, Dordrecht, Springer, 2008, pp. 25-28.

[114] H.W. Schmuhl, *The Kaiser Wilhelm Institute*, cit., p. 85; É. Conte, C. Essner, *Culti di sangue*, cit., pp. 70, sg.

[115] M.L. Haack, *The invention of the Etruscan "race"*, cit.

[116] H.W. Schmuhl, *The Kaiser Wilhelm Institute*, cit., pp. 113-114.

[117] H.W. Schmuhl, *The Kaiser Wilhelm Institute*, cit., pp. 120-121.

[118] É. Conte, C. Essner, *Culti di sangue*, cit., pp. 57-82.

to the political importance of his scientific position and theories, from 1934 onwards, the Nazi regime presented Fischer as one of the leading names in German scientific racism, promoting positions that were different from those of Günther and Rosenberg. In July 1934, Fischer and Gross attended the International Congress of Anthropology and Ethnology in London; in 1935, Gross entered the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Institut's direction while following the first negotiations on the German-Italian racist convergence.[119] In 1937, Rudolf Hess appointed Fischer as the German representative at the Second International Congress of Anthropology and Ethnology in Copenhagen, which he attended in August 1938, again together with Gross.[120] That same year, in the context of the Italian-German convergence and the promotion of Italian biological racism, Fischer imposed himself as a point of reference for Guido Landra's group. Thus, as the German anthropologist held conferences in Italy on German racism, in spring 1938 he came into contact with Landra as he was developing — together with Mussolini and Alfieri — the aforementioned "Manifesto della razza". From that moment on, Landra indicated Fischer as his scientific model and renounced his own education, which had been influenced by Giuseppe Sergi's Mediterranean race theory, visiting anthropological institutes in Germany. It is no coincidence that Fischer was very critical of Italian scholars: he considered Sergio Sergi and the majority of Italian anthropologists as Jews, and he looked favourably on the growth of anti-Semitism in Italian universities, even trying — with the help of Gross — to mediate in favour of Landra's academic career, but without success.[121] Fischer's influence on the young Italian scholar during the elaboration of Fascist "biological" racism is therefore a fact that must not be underestimated, and which finds confirmation in the contents conveyed by *La Difesa della Razza*.

In 1938, the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Institut funded one of Fischer's trips to Italy, during which he decided to study the racial composition of the Etruscans.[122] The results of the research were presented at the Academy of Sciences in Berlin, in December 1938, and published the following year in the form of two articles. Fischer observed and photographed Etruscan human representations of both pictorial and sculptural nature in Bologna, Florence and Tarquinia, which he analysed and then compared with the phenotypes of races known in the field of anthropology. In particular, he focused on the Etruscans' facial features and nose. After comparing the depictions with oriental, Mediterranean and Nordic phenotypes, Fischer concluded that the Etruscans did not belong to

[119] H.W. Schmuhl, *The Kaiser Wilhelm Institute*, cit., p. 137.

[120] M.L. Haack, *The invention of the Etruscan "race"*, cit., p. 258.

[121] A. Gillette, *Racial Theories in Fascist Italy*, cit., pp. 68-69; F. Cassata, "*La Difesa della razza"*, cit., p. 200; H.W. Schmuhl, *The Kaiser Wilhelm Institute*, cit., p. 314; G. Fabre, *Il razzismo del duce*, cit., p. 372.

[122] H.W. Schmuhl, *The Kaiser Wilhelm Institute*, cit., p. 169.

any known race and that they represented an ethnic group in itself. He called this group the "aquiline race", because of the aquiline nose that he felt was a characteristic element of the Etruscans and of Tuscans like Dante. The German anthropologist specifically evoked the studies of his Italian colleague Fabio Frassetto, a scholar of Etruscan craniology. Together with Giuseppe Sergi, Frassetto had attended the exhumation of the medieval poet's remains on the occasion of the sixth centenary of his death,[123] and in a 1933 study he defined Dante's nose as "convex or aquiline" and stated that his skull had "forms that were not uncommon in Etruscan skulls", attributing both the poet and the Etruscans to the Mediterranean race described by Giuseppe Sergi.[124] Fischer also claimed to have seen living examples of Etruscans in Tuscany, Lazio and Umbria. Interestingly, he traced the origins of this race back to the Indo-European civilisation, even if he claimed that the Etruscans completed their "racial formation" in central Italy.[125] This de facto inclusion of the Etruscans in the Aryan identity by the Catholic scholar is consistent with the Italian and German Catholics' criticism of Rosenberg. Given Fischer's vicinity to Landra, this interpretation of the Etruscans — so distant from the orientalist and anti-Christian version of Rosenberg, Evola and Cogni — was readily accepted by the group of Italian "biological" racists.

The eugenicist's first interactions with the Fascist biological racism group began at an early stage; already in the issue of 5 November 1938, the editorial board of *La Difesa della Razza* published a letter from Fischer in which he confirmed that he had subscribed the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Institut to the journal and praised the Italian racist campaign.[126] However, it was mainly Giuseppe Pensabene, a Palermo architect and art critic,[127] who disseminated Fischer's theories on the Etruscans via Interlandi's journal, starting with the issue of 20 March 1939. In previous years, Pensabene had already been active as a racist theorist and interpreter of Etruscan identity for Interlandi's *Quadrivio*; there he had alternated positive judgements on the Etruscans, whom he assimilated to the Romans,[128] with a pro-Nazi column on racial issues co-authored with the

[123] Fabio Frassetto, Giuseppe Sergi, *Esame antropologico delle ossa di Dante nel VI Centenario della sua morte*, "Rivista di Antropologia", XXVI, 1924-1925, pp. 3, sg. See Comitato Permanente per l'Etruria (Ente per le Attività Toscane), *Atti del primo congresso internazionale etrusco*, cit., p. 262; Fabio Frassetto, *Crania etrusca. Le forme craniche degli Etruschi e il problema delle origini etrusche*, "Rivista di Antropologia", XXIX, 1930-1932, p. 463.

[124] Fabio Frassetto, *Dantis ossa. La forma corporea di Dante*, Bologna, R. Università di Bologna, 1933, pp. 24 and 77.

[125] M.L. Haack, *The invention of the Etruscan "race"*, cit., pp. 268-280.

[126] *Di pari passo con gli amici italiani*, "La Difesa della razza", II, 1, 5 November 1938, p. 46.

[127] F. Cassata, *"La Difesa della razza"*, cit., p. 8.

[128] Giuseppe Pensabene, *Originalità della scultura romana*, "Quadrivio", III, 38, 21 July 1935, pp. 1-2; Giuseppe Pensabene, *L'ultima fase della scultura antica*, "Quadrivio", III, 39, 28 July 1935, p. 4.

South Tyrolean journalist Helmut Gasteiner,[129] in which he disseminated the anti-Etruscan theories of Grünwedel, Günther and Rosenberg.[130] In *La Difesa della Razza*, on the other hand, Pensabene followed in Fischer's footsteps as he engaged in a racial appropriation of Etruscan identity, writing under the pseudonym of "G. Dell'Isola".[131] According to the art critic, "the question of the origin of the Etruscans is not simply a historical curiosity for us Italians, but a vital starting point to fully understand the civilisation of ancient Italy and the Renaissance". Anthropology was considered the key to interpreting the problem of "[studying] the racial character" of the Etruscans. Pensabene explicitly presented Fischer's theories as works of scientific "objectivity", based on "positive elements" and in contrast to the "ease with which Rosemberg [*sic*], for example, without any positive element, had issued statements and judgements that, although very widespread, we could not possibly share". After quoting passages by Fischer on the "living Etruscans" of contemporary Italian cities, accompanied by photos and drawings made by Fischer himself, Pensabene argued that the aquiline race "had already been in central Italy ever since the Neolithic age; long before the Aryans arrived on the peninsula". According to him, the Etruscans were not oriental but perhaps Indo-Europeans who were later absorbed by the aquiline race. Nevertheless, he added the following: "[W]hat in ancient times was called Etruscan civilisation, and later resurfaced as the Tuscan civilisation of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, was entirely the achievement of the primitive race."[132]

Two weeks later, in the issue of 5 April 1939, Pensabene continued his reflections, arguing for the primacy of the "Mediterranean Aryans" (i.e. ancient Greeks and "Italic peoples of all times") in art. He recalled that the Etruscans were not Mediterranean Aryans but, "as has by now been demonstrated", formed an autonomous race present only in central Italy, which owed its "unmistakable physiognomy" to both the Etruscans and the Mediterraneans. Pensabene affirmed that Italian art must remain faithful to the Mediterranean Aryan race, of which Etruscan art is considered an original product:

> The Mediterranean and the Etruscan races are therefore the only two races to which, since time immemorial, we owe our excellence in the figurative arts. What has been achieved in Europe in this field depends — directly or indirectly — on them. Lastly, the Renaissance is due to one and the other, which have remained intact. And since Italy is always the homeland

[129] F. Cassata, *"La Difesa della razza"*, cit., p. 33.

[130] See H.G., G.P. [Helmut Gasteiner, Giuseppe Pensabene], *La composizione razzistica del popolo italiano*, "Quadrivio", V, 14, 31 January 1937, p. 5; H.G., G.P., *Il popolo eletto sorge all'orizzonte della nazione italiana*, "Quadrivio", V, 16, 14 February 1937, p. 3; H.G., G.P., *L'urbanesimo e la razza*, "Quadrivio", V, 19, 7 March 1937, p. 2; H.G., G.P., *La razza e l'ambiente*, "Quadrivio", V, 25, 18 April 1937, p. 6.

[131] F. Cassata, *"La Difesa della razza"*, cit., p. 296.

[132] G. Dell'Isola [Giuseppe Pensabene], *La razza aquilina*, "La Difesa della razza", II, 10, 20 March 1939, pp. 8-10.

of these races, sooner or later their natural artistic supremacy will inevitably flourish here. Nor should we forget that, even after the Renaissance ended, in a time when political and economic decadence seemed to have further depressed the life of our country, the constant persistence of both sufficed to maintain our supremacy.[133]

Pensabene's reception of Fischer's studies is therefore explicit, as was his rejection of Rosenberg's theories, which he himself had helped to disseminate along with Helmut Gasteiner. In fact, although he did not directly integrate the Etruscans into the Aryan identity, Pensabene aligned them with the Aryan-Mediterranean race and thus claimed that they were among the progenitors of the Italian race and art. Even in his later articles, Pensabene continued to consider Etruria a "great manifestation" of classic Italy and claim its legacy against the bourgeois and internationalist interpretations of the history of Italy.[134] Gasteiner, by contrast, still seemed to count the Etruscans among the matriarchal Mediterranean civilisations, even if he did not openly return to this subject.[135]

La Difesa della Razza continued to disseminate Fischer's theories. An exchange of opinions between a reader and the editors, in the issue of 5 October 1939, offers an interesting example of the way Interlandi and Landra's group interpreted the Etruscans. A reader from the Tuscan city of Livorno asked the editors to recommend "a good book on pre-Roman Italy" that contained information on races. They recommended two texts by Giambattista Vico, *De Antiquissima Italorum Sapientia* (On the Ancient Wisdom of the Italians) and *Scienza Nuova* (New Science), Vincenzo Cuoco's *Platone in Italia* (Plato in Italy), Giuseppe Micali's *Italia avanti il dominio dei Romani* (Italy before the Roman domination) and two works by the Etruscologist Pericle Ducati, *L'Italia antica* (Ancient Italy) and *Etruria antica* (Ancient Etruria). The reader also asked another question: "In a map of Italy, in a room dedicated to Etruria of a large museum in Berlin, it says that the Etruscans are not Indo-Germanic. What is your opinion?" The editors expressly rejected the reader's doubts as they would make the Etruscans a foreign body in Italian racial history:

Apart from the fact that you should not get fixated on these definitions of Indo-Germanic and Indo-European, which only indicate what they can contain; apart from the fact that many German scientists considered the Etruscans to be Indo-European; I can tell you now that others have changed their minds too, and that Eugenio Fischer made a statement on this matter to the Academy of Sciences in Berlin.

The editors also referred the reader to the article on the aquiline race by G. Dell'Isola/Pensabene:

[133] G. Dell'Isola, *La razza nell'arte*, "La Difesa della razza", II, 11, 5 April 1939, pp. 21-22.

[134] G. Dell'Isola, *Storia d'Italia dal punto di vista italiano*, "La Difesa della razza", III, 4, 20 December 1939, p. 27.

[135] Elio [*sic*] Gasteiner, *Psicologia razziale*, "La Difesa della razza", III, 5, 5 January 1940, p. 19.

After all, we need only to look at Etruscan painting and sculpture, [at] Roman sculpture, to consider Rome's religion and monarchy, to observe an Etruscan face and Dante's face, Etruscan art and Renaissance art, to compare both to Greek art in order to understand that Etruria is the matrix of Rome.

To a further question from the reader about an English edition of Günther's work, the editors gave the following reply: "We believe that this is the English translation of Rassenkunde Europas by Günther himself, a German work that is backward and certainly wrong as far as Italy is concerned. I do not think we should give it any consideration."[136] The position of *La Difesa della Razza* on the Etruscans — regardless of the different points of view — was therefore openly inspired by Fischer's ideas and in contrast to those of Günther and Rosenberg. This way, it could continue to claim that the Etruscan identity was at the roots of the Italian race and deny that it was an oriental or Semitic import, thus avoiding the issue of Catholicism. Although the "biological" racist discourse was inspired by scientific theories, in the colloquial dialogue with the reader the journal invited him not to get stuck on technical matters and to trust the ethnic continuity between Etruria, Rome and modern Italy.

In the issue of 5 January 1940, another Tuscan reader sent the editorial office an article on the Etruscans taken from an unspecified Italian journal, expressly asking for a comment from Claudio Calosso, whose article he had read in *La Difesa della Razza*. In this article, published on 20 October 1939, Calosso had theorised a "close Mediterranean unity", distinct from the Camites and the Semites and more akin to the peoples of central and northern Europe, which would have included Italy since antiquity. Calosso addressed the question of the Etruscans' origins from this Aryan-Mediterranean perspective but without finding a solution, even though he supported the autochthonic thesis. Nevertheless, he linked the Etruscan problem to the Mediterranean identity, which he considered similar to the Aryan one.[137] Two months later, the reader received an unsigned reply from the editors of *La Difesa della Razza*, who explained that Calosso's article on the Etruscans took into account an unpublished nineteenth-century study by Father Camillo Tarquini, a supporter of the idea that there was an affinity between the Etruscan and the Jewish language. For the editors of *La Difesa della Razza*, it was only one of many vain attempts to decipher the Etruscan language:

It is useless to reconstruct the history of these attempts to explain a language, of which we have insufficient documentation. The mystery of the language is not the mystery of the Etruscan nation, which represented an important part of the Roman monarchy. Etruscan art is enough for us, and the Etruscan background of Tuscan Renaissance art is enough to understand that this is not Semitic blood. The comparison of those images is enough for us.

[136] See "La Difesa della razza", II, 23, 5 October 1939, p. 44.

[137] Claudio Calosso, *L'unità mediterranea*, "La Difesa della razza", II, 24, 20 October 1939. pp. 12-13.

But what is incredible is that an Italian newspaper is caught by the yearning to be Semitic precisely when Germanic studies on the aquiline race have discovered a rich documentation in the sculpture of Etruscan portraits.

The reply went on to quote (in Italian) Fischer's passage on "living Etruscans", and concluded by stating that the question of the Etruscans' race was "a fundamental question of Italian civilisation".[138] The solution to this racial problem was not sought in linguistics but in Fischer's anthropology and, ultimately, in the belief in a racial continuity between the Etruscans and modern Italy. The importance of the Etruscan question for "biological" racists lies in the inclusion of the Etruscans in the Italian, Aryan or Aryan-Mediterranean racial identity, to prevent them from being declared a foreign — and potentially Semitic — body in the Italian race, or as an anti-Christian polemical argument. In his subsequent interventions, Calosso explicitly argued for the Etruscans' inclusion in Aryanism.[139]

Another interpreter of the Etruscan identity who drew inspiration from Fischer was Ottorino Gurrieri, a journalist and art historian from the central region of Umbria.[140] Already in the issue of 5 January 1939, Gurrieri stated that the Etruscans did not come from the East, but were "Italic peoples who arose from the evolution of nuclei in Umbrian and central zones". He argued for a continuity of the "Italic race" throughout the centuries, a real "ethnic and racial unity" of Aryan nature that would have enabled an Italian resurrection in the modern and contemporary age.[141] In 1941, Gurrieri picked up the question of the Etruscans again, citing Fischer's work and Dell'Isola/Pensabene's article on the "autochthonous and pure" aquiline race. Gurrieri wrote that the Etruscans and the Romans, albeit racially derived from "a single lineage", merged and gave birth to a "common type": the "Italic" and "Aquiline" type. In particular, he considered Dante a perfect example of the aquiline racial type that was "closest to the Fischerian theory", namely an "archaic-Etruscan" race; in his opinion, the medieval poet was "the type, or rather, the archetype, of the Italian who, beyond the Latin era, also dates back to the Etruscan and archaic origins" — one of the "great aquiline [types]".[142]

Fischer himself also published a contribution on scientific racism in *La Difesa della Razza*. In the editors' presentation, it is said that the scholar made "repeated trips to Italy between 1935 and 1938 to study the question of the

[138] *La razza aquilina*, "La Difesa della razza", III, 5, 5 January 1940, p. 46.

[139] Claudio Calosso, *La civiltà minoico-cicladica*, "La Difesa della razza", IV, 23, 5 October 1941, pp. 18-22.

[140] F. Cassata, "*La Difesa della razza*", cit., p. 299.

[141] Ottorino Gurrieri, *Unità della razza dagli Etruschi al Rinascimento*, "La Difesa della razza", II, 5, 5 January 1939, p. 16.

[142] Ottorino Gurrieri, *Genio artistico della nostra razza*, "La Difesa della razza", IV, 13, 5 May 1941, pp. 10-11.

Etruscans" and, in particular, "the race of the Etruscans". Fischer promoted a type of anthropology among the "biological" racists that was not only physical — following a positivist model — but also genetic, inspired by Mendel's laws of heredity: race was a human group united by genes and by the same biological inheritance. By contrast, he criticised Lamarckian theory for being "the Jewish theory of the environment".[143] Landra also intervened in the journal to praise the work of his teacher Fischer. In the issue of 5 April 1940, he mentioned Fabio Frassetto's work on Dante's bones, which he presented at conferences in Germany and Cracow in 1938. In particular, Landra recalled a lecture given at the University of Berlin:

> This conference finally put an end to the many rumours that had once circulated about the racial features of our most esteemed poet. The great anthropologist Eugenio [*sic*] Fischer, with whom we spoke about the matter, strongly praised Frassetto's study and, based on it, gained new insights to investigate the problem of the origin of the Etruscans.[144]

In another article of the same year, in which he praised the cultural role of *La Difesa della Razza*, Landra wrote: "We must still credit our journal for having brought to the Italian reader's knowledge the most recent results on the problem of the Etruscans' origins. The article on the 'aquiline race' that appeared in this journal has represented a real clarification of this important problem".[145] In 1941, Interlandi's *Tevere* published a public account by Landra of his talks with Fischer on the subject of the aquiline race, which took place during his visit to Berlin in February. For readers of the Fascist newspaper, Landra presented Fischer as "the world's leading anthropologist and scholar of racial problems. To him we owe the conversion of an outdated anthropology into the modern biology of human races". Exaggerating the very extent of Fischer's scientific and political consensus among German anthropologists, Landra claimed that he had an "enormous" degree of authority and an almost unanimously recognised scientific hegemony in Germany, such that he could simply be considered "the representative of German science". The Italian anthropologist also underlined Fischer's role in Nazi racial policy, describing him as a very influential collaborator of Walter Gross's Rassenpolitisches Amt. In the *Tevere*, in particular, Landra presented Fischer's ideas on the aquiline race as innovative and fundamental for the formulation of Italian racism, which was alternative both to Sergi's — and national-racist — Mediterraneanism and to the Aryanism promoted by Rosenberg and his followers. In fact,

[143] Eugenio [*sic*] Fischer, *La realtà della razza*, "La Difesa della razza", III, 1, 5 November 1939, pp. 11-17. For a popularisation of Fischer's work, see "La Difesa della razza" III, 10.

[144] Guido Landra, *Gli studi razziali a Bologna*, "La Difesa della razza", III, 11, 5 April 1940, p. 16.

[145] Guido Landra, *Due anni di razzismo italiano*, "La Difesa della razza", III, 17, 5 July 1940, p. 17.

he presented the aquiline race as an autochthonous racial grouping of central-northern Italy that presented "intermediate" traits between the "Nordics" and the "Mediterraneans", and as the creator of an "Italian civilisation". Landra considered this theory a scientific confirmation of the position he had expressed in the "Manifesto della razza", namely of the existence of an autonomous Italian race:

> The Etruscans, who have had such a strong influence on the population of Italy, belonged to the aquiline race. Fischer does not fully exclude the possibility that the Etruscans also underwent Levantine influences, but these must have been minimal and not such as to affect the racial structure of Italy.
> At this point, it is very interesting to recall the fact that Rosenberg, in his famous book, had firmly stated that the Etruscans were Levantine and that Italy's true civilisation was only of Nordic origin. Fischer told us that he had recently had a conversation with Rosenberg on this subject and that Rosenberg ended up agreeing that the new data Fischer himself had highlighted rendered his discussion of the Etruscan question outdated.

Finally, in conversation with Landra, Fischer was said to have denied that he is a "materialist" and an advocate of the non-existence of the soul, or that his hereditary racial theories could lead to "a form of biological determinism in contrast to Fascist and National Socialist ethics". Interestingly, the Italian scholar explained his German teacher's position by drawing a parallel between science and religion: "[J]ust as the free will of the Church is reconciled with Providence, so the will remains intact alongside the laws of heredity."[146] Thus, in addition to emphasising the political importance of the theory of the aquiline race, Landra also defended Fischer's biological racism against accusations of irreconcilability with Fascist and Catholic ethics.

Conclusion

Through the systematic divulgation of Eugen Fischer's theories, the Fascist group of "biological" racists avoided the anti-Etruscan denigrations of Rosenberg, Evola and Cogni that were loaded with anti-Christian implications, instead integrating the Etruscans — considered Indo-Europeans — into the Italian race. The "aquiline race" theory thus served as a scientific formula aimed at denying the presence of foreign bodies in the history of the Italian race and avoiding an ideological clash with the Catholic Church. In this sense, it could be read as a symbol of the pro-Catholic tactics of the "biological" group. However, this tactic failed to produce a lasting equilibrium. If, in the spring of 1942, Landra's group and the Catholic hierarchies actually seemed to have found a political convergence capable of countering the "esoteric-

[146] Guido Landra, *A colloquio con E. Fischer*, "Il Tevere", 4-5 February 1941, p. 3.

traditionalist" hegemony over racist cultural policy,[147] the fall of the regime in the following year seemed to put an end to the complex dialectic between Italian "biological" racists and the Church, given the removal of the former from positions of power.[148] As for the origin of the Etruscans, the interpretation that gained the most ground in the post-war period was that of Massimo Pallottino, a scholar with a Catholic formation who was close to the "national-racist" faction of Giacomo Acerbo.[149] In 1947, Pallottino stated that he considered Fischer's ideas "pure amateurish fantasies" that were "outside the scientific method".[150] Hence, the "aquiline race" thesis did not seem to have any following in post-fascist Italy, limiting its success to the years of state racism and the pro-Catholic tactics of Landra's group. While remaining in a minority position in Italian culture, albeit hegemonic in the neo-fascist context, Julius Evola would continue to promote his racist, anti-Etruscan beliefs.[151]

To gain a better understanding of the transnational dynamics of scientific racism between 1938 and 1943, further research would be necessary on the Holy See and the German side of the affair: for example, on the financing of Fischer's "Etruscologist" research and the Nazis' political and cultural interests in turning the Catholic eugenicist into a point of reference for Italian biological racism, in a sense hostile to Rosenberg and functional to the search for a balance with the Catholic Church. Regarding Italy, my analysis of the political use of the Etruscans in *La Difesa della Razza* ultimately offers a new perspective on the Italian-German dimension and an explanation of the scientific and ideological inspirations as well as the political tactics of Fascist biological racism.

[147] F. Cassata, *"La Difesa della razza"*, cit., p. 82. For a different interpretation, see G. Fabre, *Il razzismo del duce*, p. 385.

[148] Obviously, this does not put an end to the existence of non-biological racist and anti-Semitic positions in the Catholic hierarchy: see Renato Moro, *La Chiesa e lo sterminio degli ebrei*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2002, pp. 197-198; Elena Mazzini, *L'antiebraismo cattolico dopo la Shoah. Tradizioni e culture nell'Italia del secondo dopoguerra (1945-1974)*, Rome, Viella, 2012.

[149] His appreciation of Acerbo's theories is expressed in *Etruscologia*, Milan, Hoepli, 1942, p. 26n. On Massimo Pallottino see Filippo Delpino, *Appunti per una biografia intellettuale di Massimo Pallottino*, in Laura Michetti (ed.), *Massimo Pallottino a dieci anni dalla scomparsa. Atti dell'Incontro di Studio. Roma, 10-11 novembre 2005*, Rome, Quasar, 2007, pp. 1-27; Marco Minoja, *Massimo Pallottino*, in Ministero per i beni e le attività culturali, *Dizionario biografico dei Soprintendenti Archeologi (1904-1974)*, Bologna, Bononia University Press, 2012, pp. 581-587.

[150] Massimo Pallottino, *L'origine degli Etruschi*, Rome, Tumminelli, 1947, pp. 12 e 131.

[151] See Julius Evola, *Gli uomini e le rovine* in Julius Evola, *Gli uomini e le rovine e Orientamenti*, Rome, Edizioni Mediterranee, 2001 (first edition 1953), p. 195.

"They crossed the sea on dry land". The Jews of Libya in Italian Displaced Persons camps and the international refugee regime in the aftermath of the Second World War (1948-1949)*

Chiara Renzo**

The establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 significantly reduced the number of Jewish displaced persons in Italy's DP camps. However, it also marked the beginning of an unexpected movement of some eight thousand Jews who, between 1948 and 1949, travelled to Italy from Libya, seeking international assistance to resettle in Israel. This article explores the reasons for which the Jews of Libya illegally attempted to reach Italy's DP camps, the role Jewish and Zionist organisations played in this process, and the reaction of international humanitarianism to the ensuing emergency. It argues that a Eurocentric vision, intrinsically rooted in the international refugee regime of that time, deprived the Jews fleeing from Libya of the status of displaced persons.
Key words: Jews of Libya, Displaced persons (DPs), DP camps, Italy, Second World

Introduction

Statistics tend to conceal the realities of human tragedy behind a curtain of useful administrative data. There is a danger of forgetting the personal disasters — the misery of family torn apart, the uprooting of people from their homes, and the difficulties of living in strange and not always congenial communities, the frequent and pernicious condition of lethargy, so often an aftermath of the shock of sudden catastrophe.[1]

These are the opening lines of a very short paragraph written by Louise W. Holborn and called "human problems". In the 1950s, Holborn was given the task to write the official history of the International Refugee Organization (IRO): between 1947 and 1951, the United Nations agency offered assistance to 1,037,404 refugees of the Second World War in Germany, Austria and Italy.[2]

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[1] Louise W. Holborn, *International Refugee Organization: A Specialized Agency of The United Nations. Its History and Work, 1946-1952*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1956, pp. 190-91.

[2] On the refugee crisis in post-war Europe, see Malcolm J. Proudfoot, *European Refugees: 1939-52. A Study in Forced Population Movement*, Evanston, Northwestern University Press,

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These were the last of seven million people who, at the end of the war, found themselves outside the borders of their countries and lacking the means to restart their lives, thus falling under the responsibility of the Allied army and, subsequently, the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA).[3] The latter was the United Nations' first humanitarian arm to enter into action at the end of the war with the aim of offering "relief and rehabilitation" to the populations that had been affected by the conflict, importing the new welfare model that was developed during the years of the New Deal.[4] By forging agreements with local governments and collaborating with various humanitarian voluntary organisations, until 1947 the UNRRA also endeavoured to manage and implement solutions for the refugee problem, considered an element of great instability that might jeopardise the democratisation project in post-war Europe.[5]

The above-mentioned refugee numbers could have been even higher if we consider the fact that, during the conflict, some thirty million people were deported, relocated, expelled or forced to leave their country.[6] Yet, not all of those who survived the six years of war were granted the right to assistance by the UNRRA and the IRO. From 1945 onwards, UNRRA and IRO officials found themselves interrogating, classifying, controlling and managing millions of people and, consequently, millions of personal experiences of a war that had torn Europe apart, distorted its geopolitical connotations and destroyed or separated countless families. To determine who was entitled to international assistance and who was not, the officials used manuals filled with definitions, clauses, exceptions, descriptions of ethnic or national groups, and chronologies of the conflict for each and every European country that had been affected by the war.

Although the criteria for entitlement were redefined and adapted over time, the only civilians considered eligible were those from UN member countries who, by the end of the war, were outside the borders of their home country for conflict-related reasons and willing, but unable, to repatriate or to find a

1956; Jacques Vernant, *The Refugee in the Post-War World*, London, Allen & Unwin, 1953; Mark Wyman, *DP: Europe's Displaced Persons, 1945-1951*, Philadelphia, Balch Institute Press, 1989. For a broader analysis of the refugee crisis in the twentieth century, see: Michael R. Marrus, *The Unwanted: European Refugees in the Twentieth Century*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1985.

[3] On the history of the UNRRA, see George Woodbridge, *UNRRA: the history of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1950.

[4] On the development of international humanitarian work in the second post-war period, see Silvia Salvatici, *Nel nome degli altri. Storia dell'umanitarismo internazionale*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2015, pp. 192-207.

[5] On the discussion of the UNRRA's intervention in Italy, see Silvia Salvatici, *"Not enough food to feed the people". L'UNRRA in Italia (1944-1945)*, "Contemporanea. Rivista di Storia dell'800 e del '900", 2011, n. 1, pp. 183-99.

[6] For an analysis of the war as a "civilian experience" see Tony Judt, *Postwar. A History of Europe since 1945*, London, Vintage, 2005, pp. 13-40.

new homeland on their own account. The so-called "displaced persons" (hereafter DPs) were the sole exception: those who, during the war, had been persecuted for religious, racial or political reasons, and who were eligible for assistance from UN agencies regardless of their nationality. This long and endless screening process, which focused on the principle of nationality, mixed the need to identify and attribute responsibilities for the war — by distinguishing victims from executioners — with old prejudices against and new doubts about the refugees and the poor.

This article focuses on a group of nearly eight thousand Jews who, between 1948 and 1949, illegally crossed the Mediterranean Sea from Libya to the Italian Displaced Persons camps (hereafter DP camps), with the final aim of reaching Israel. The Libyan Jewish community, which between 1938 and 1943 had been brought to its knees by the Italian racial policy and by the war, had failed both to re-establish itself under British occupation and to be recognised as a minority in the political discourse on Libya's independence. Moreover, the outbreak of anti-Jewish violence in 1945 and 1948 had greatly enhanced the difficulties of this community: encouraged also by Zionist organisations, it was forced to leave its country in the hope of emigrating to the State of Israel.[7]

Between 1945 and 1948, an annual average of 15-16,000 Jewish DPs — almost all from Eastern Europe — lived in DP camps and *hachsharot* located throughout the country. The camps were administered by the UNRRA and, subsequently, by the IRO,[8] in cooperation with a network of Jewish organisations; these included institutions founded locally by Jewish Palestinian soldiers of the Allied army, those of the political delegates of the Jewish Agency and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (hereafter JDC).[9] Scholarship has demonstrated that, after the liberation of the southern regions in 1943, Italy became a land of passage for thousands of refugees, mainly foreign

[7] On the Jews in Libya, see Renzo De Felice, *Ebrei in un paese arabo. Gli ebrei nella Libia contemporanea tra colonialismo, nazionalismo arabo e sionismo*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1978; Maurice M. Roumani, *Gli ebrei di Libia. Dalla coesistenza all'esodo*, Rome, Castelvecchi, 2015; Harvey E. Goldberg, *Libya*, in Reeva Spector Simon, Michael M. Laskier, Sara Reguer (eds.), *The Jews of the Middle East and North Africa in Modern Times*, New York, Columbia University Press, 2002, pp. 431-443.

[8] The *hachsharot* (singular *hachsharah*) were agricultural farms founded by various delegates of the Jewish Agency in the refugee camps, which were meant to accommodate and prepare the DPs for emigration to Palestine. Arturo Marzano, *Relief and rehabilitation of Jewish DPs after the Shoah: the Hachsharot in Italy (1945-48)*, "Journal of Modern Jewish Studies", 2019, vol. 18, n. 3, pp. 314-329.

[9] The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee is one of the largest Jewish humanitarian organisations. Founded in 1914 and based in New York, its aim was to centralise the aid to the Jewish communities affected by the First World War. On the JDC's contribution during the Second World War, see Yehuda Bauer, *American Jewry and the Holocaust: The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, 1939-1945*, Detroit, Wayne State University Press, 1981. For a more recent historical overview of its first 100 years, see Avinoam Patt e al., *The JDC at 100. A Century of Humanitarianism*, Detroit, Wayne State University Press, 2019.

Jews who poured into the country in an attempt to leave Europe and often also reach British Palestine illegally.[10] In this regard, the Italian government's tacit support was essential for the accomplishment of the plans of the Mossad le-Aliyah Bet, the secret arm of the Jewish Agency that was responsible for organising the clandestine aliyah of the Jews who had survived the war.[11] Conversely, Italy played a far more limited role in the assistance and rehabilitation of foreign refugees; at the end of the war, the government mainly had to take responsibility for Italian displaced persons and refugees.[12] Even after the establishment of the State of Israel, Italy continued to be a preferred travel route for Jewish migrants: thousands of DPs, coming even from German and Austrian camps, began their trip towards Israel, the United States, Australia, Canada or Latin America in Italian ports. Nevertheless, just as the assistance programmes for Jewish DPs in Italy were about to be reduced, a sudden wave of Jewish migrants from Libya forced Jewish humanitarian organisations to review their mission in response to this emergency.

In 1948, Libya counted 32,670 Jews, of whom 21,000 lived in Tripoli, 4,500 in Cyrenaica and the rest in coastal towns and villages.[13] On 27 January 1949, shortly before the UK de facto recognised the State of Israel, the British military administration officially authorised the legal emigration of Libyan Jews directly from Tripoli to the port of Haifa. Over the next three years, some thirty thousand four hundred Jews "made aliyah". The JDC estimated that, from the foundation of the State of Israel until that moment, about two and

[10] It is not possible to thoroughly examine the refugee issue in Italy here, but various publications have explored different aspects of this phenomenon in depth. For a general analysis of the refugee crisis in Italy between 1945 and 1951 see Silvia Salvatici, *Between National and International Mandates: Displaced Persons and Refugees in Postwar Italy*, "Journal of Contemporary History, 2014, vol. 49, n. 3, pp. 514-536; on the Jewish refugees, the organisations that dealt with them, and other aspects of their stay in Italian refugee camps, see Cinzia Villani, *Milano, via Unione 5: un centro di accoglienza per displaced persons ebree nel secondo dopoguerra*, "Studi Storici", vol. 50, n. 2, 2009, pp. 333-370; Martina Ravagnan, *I campi Displaced Persons per profughi ebrei stranieri in Italia (1945-1950)*, "Storia e Futuro", n. 30, 2012; Chiara Renzo, *"Our Hopes Are Not Lost Yet." The Jewish Displaced Persons in Italy: Relief, Rehabilitation and Self-understanding (1943-1948)*, "Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History. Journal of Fondazione CDEC, 2017, n.12; Federica di Padova, *Rinascere in Italia. Matrimoni e nascite nei campi per Displaced Persons ebree 1943-1948*, "Deportate, esuli, profughe", vol. 1, n. 36, 2018, pp. 1-19.

[11] The aliyah, Hebrew for "to ascend", refers to the Jewish immigration to Palestine and, after 1948, to the State of Israel. For a discussion of the Italian government's position on the illegal immigration of Jewish refugees to Palestine, see Mario Toscano, *La «Porta di Sion»: l'Italia e l'immigrazione clandestina ebraica in Palestina, 1945-1948*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1990; Idith Zertal, *From Catastrophe to Power: the Holocaust Survivors and the Emergence of Israel*, Berkley: University of California Press, 1998, pp. 17-51.

[12] Silvia Salvatici, *Between National*, cit; Giacomo Canepa, *Rifare gli italiani. Profughi e progetti per il welfare (1944-47)*, in "Meridiana", N. 86, 2016, pp. 57-78.

[13] These figures exclude the Libyan Jews of foreign nationality. Roumani, *Gli ebrei di Libia*, cit., p. 202.

a half thousand Libyan Jews migrated to Israel via Italy.[14] Having until then devoted all its energies to assisting the Jews in the DP camps of Germany, Austria and Italy, as well as helping the European Jewish communities face the difficult reconstruction process of the post-war period, the JDC was forced not only to expand its mission in Libya (and throughout the whole of North Africa) but also to manage an unexpected flow of men, women and children arriving in Italy in the hope of receiving assistance as DPs fleeing their country, as had previously happened to their European co-religionists.

Nonetheless, the transition of the Libyan Jews in the Italian DP camps did not end when the UK authorised emigration from Tripoli to Israel; between January and September 1949, another 5,400 people took this route.[15] Scholarship has only partially studied this case, which is numerically insignificant in the European scenario of the refugee crisis of the second post-war period, discussing it almost exclusively as a marginal aspect of the exodus of Libyan Jews to Israel after 1948.[16]

This article aims to investigate and question the consequences of anti-Jewish persecution during the Second World War as well as the post-war displacement of Jews beyond their conventional boundaries.[17] In doing so it takes inspiration from Peter Gatrell's observations in his essay *Refugees — what's wrong with history?* Wondering why historians have ignored the experiences of refugees for so long, in this essay Gatrell argued that we must rely on historical investigations to fully understand the condition of being a refugee ("refugeedom"), considered as "a matrix involving administrative practices, legal norms, social relations, and refugees' experiences, and how these have been represented in cultural terms".[18] Gatrell therefore urged historians to avoid "piling up a series

[14] American Joint Distribution Committee Country Directors' Conference Paris, 1 October 1952, in Archives of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (hereafter AJDC), New York, G45-54/4/22/4/NA.58 North Africa: Country Directors Conference Paris 1952.

[15] These data are drawn from quarterly reports provided by the JDC, which estimates the transit of 1,107 people between January and March 1949, 1,335 in April-June 1949, and 2,393 in July-September 1949. This last group — referred to as "North Africans" by the JDC — included another 659 Jews who were sent to Marseille for medical treatment. Ajdc activities in Italy, January-March 1949, 23 June 1949; Ajdc activities in Italy, April-June 1949, 29 August 1949; Ajdc activities in Italy, July-September 1949, 23 November 1949, in AJDC, NY AR194554/4/44/2/625, Italy, General, 1949.

[16] A short reference can be found in M. Roumani, *Gli ebrei di Libia*, cit., p. 200.

[17] On the effects and consequences of the Second World War, the racial laws and anti-Semitism in North Africa, see the recent publication by Aomar Boum and Sarah Abrevaya Stein (ed.), *The Holocaust and North Africa*, Stanford (CA), Stanford University Press, 2019. For a study of Jewish displacement in a non-European context, see Atina Grossman, *Jewish Refugees in Soviet Central Asia, Iran and India. Lost Memories of Displacement, Trauma, and Rescue*, in Mark Edele, Sheila Fitzpatrick, Atina Grossmann (eds.), *Shelter from the Holocaust. Rethinking Jewish Survival in the Soviet Union*, Detroit, Wayne State University Press, 2017, pp. 185-218.

[18] Peter Gatrell, *Refugees - What's Wrong with History?*, "Journal of Refugee Studies", June 2017, vol. 30, Issue 2, pp. 170-189.

of regionally differentiated and disconnected crises and responses", rather paying attention to the connections between historical circumstances, the refugees' trajectories and the system governing the refugee crisis. This article, then, examines the circumstances and the events that pushed the Jews to leave Libya, describes the humanitarian organisations' response to their arrival in the Italian DP camps and, finally, questions the position of Libyan Jews within the system that governed the refugee crisis at the time. By studying this migration flow from Libya to Italy and from Italy to Israel, the article aims to further challenge the idea that the Second World War was an exclusively European experience, demonstrating that this Eurocentric perspective was intrinsically rooted in the international refugee regime in place at the time.

The reasons for fleeing: the experience of the Jews of Libya between 1938 and 1948

The enactment of the Italian anti-Jewish legislation of 1938 marked a turning point also in the lives of the Jews residing in Italian Libya. Initially, Italian citizens were affected by prohibitions and restrictions aimed at their total exclusion, whereas foreign Jews who had obtained Italian citizenship after 1919 were expelled.[19] Although anti-Jewish legislation in Italian Libya did not run parallel with that in Italy, it damaged social life by enhancing the differences between the Italian, Jewish and Arab citizens living in the colony.[20]

The situation of local Jewry significantly worsened with Italy's entry into the war on 10 June 1940, the start of military operations in North Africa and the ensuing involvement of new political actors on the Libyan scene (i.e. the British and the Germans). First of all, in Libya the Jews of enemy nationality — or those considered dangerous in the context of war — were interned, as was happening in Italy. In reality, internment was implemented to a moderate degree, at least initially, first in the Tagiura camp and then in that of Buerat El Hsun, in the Sirtica.[21] Although the newly appointed governor of Libya, Ettore Bastico,[22] ordered further measures for the expulsion of foreign Jews,

[19] In 1934, Tripoli counted 510 Jewish citizens of Italian nationality, 1,260 French Jews, 310 British Jews and 80 Jews of other nationalities. M. Roumani, *Gli ebrei di Libia*, cit., p. 51.

[20] De Felice identified two (interconnected) factors that determined "the very peculiar course of racial policies in Libya", which at least initially saved the Libyan Jews from the racial laws: on the one hand, Italo Balbo's role as governor of Italian Libya and, on the other hand, the Jews' economic impact on the colony. According to De Felice, Balbo managed to prevent the extension of the measures issued to Italian Jews to the Libyans by means of a series of local economic and political measures. De Felice, *Ebrei in un paese arabo*, cit., pp. 260-265.

[21] R. De Felice, *Ebrei in un paese arabo*, cit., pp. 265-66.

[22] When Italo Balbo died in an airplane incident in June 1940, Rodolfo Graziani took over as general governor of Italian Libya. Following the crushing defeat by the British army less than a year later, in March 1941 Graziani was replaced by Italo Gariboldi, who — owing to disagree-

the implementation of this plan was slowed down by the military operations on North African territory in 1940 and the temporary conquest of Cyrenaica by the British between December 1940 and April 1941, and then again between November 1941 and April 1942.[23]

After two years of war, when the Italians reconquered the Cyrenaica, the anti-Jewish measures were extended and applied more systematically, developing along multiple lines and ultimately affecting four groups. The first transfers concerned the French Jews who, in agreement with the Vichy government, were interned in concentration camps established in Tunisia, La Marsa, Agareb and Gabes. In August 1942, a report by the Police of Italian Africa (Polizia dell'Africa Italiana, hereafter PAI) stated that 2,542 French citizens — 681 Muslims and 1,861 Jews from Libya — had been interned in Tunisia.[24] In November 1942, following the Italian-German occupation of Tunisia, these concentration camps fell under Nazi control and the internees — suffering from malnutrition, lack of hygiene and Allied bombing raids, which killed 50 people — were only freed after the Allied landing in April 1943.[25]

Secondly, the Fascist government worked towards the expulsion and the internment in Italy of 870 British Jews living in Libya, who departed mainly in the period running up to April 1942, when over four hundred people were embarked on cargo ships heading towards Naples. Once in Naples, 77 men were sent to the Bagno a Ripoli camp, 51 people (mainly families) to that of Civitella della Chiana and 107 to Civitella del Tronto.[26] The arrival of the Libyan Jews, many of whom had typhus, worsened the already precarious situation in the three Italian camps, which became overcrowded and at risk from a health and hygiene point of view.[27] When the armistice was signed on 8 September 1943, these camps came under the control of the German occupation and the Italian Social Republic; in 1944, as they were about to be closed,

ments with Erwin Rommel — only remained in office until July. Ettore Bastico therefore held Balbo's position until the British occupation of Libya in 1943.

[23] Jens Hoppe, *The Persecution of Jews in Libya Between 1938 and 1945: An Italian Affair?*, in A. Boum, S. Abrevaya Stein (eds.), *The Holocaust and North Africa*, cit., pp. 58-60.

[24] M. Roumani, *Gli ebrei di Libia*, cit. p. 55; J. Hoppe, *The Persecution of Jews in Libya*, cit., pp. 61-63.

[25] J. Hoppe, *The Persecution of Jews in Libya*, cit., pp. 61-63

[26] We do not know the exact number of British Jews that was deported to the German camps. Liliana Picciotto, *Gli ebrei in Libia sotto la dominazione italiana*, in Martino Contu, Nicola Melis, Giovannino Pinna (eds.), *Ebraismo e rapporti con le culture del Mediterraneo nei secoli XVIII-XX*: atti del Convegno storico internazionale, Villacidro (Cagliari), 12-13 April 2002, Giuntina, Florence, 2003, pp. 96, 102. On the internment of the Libyan Jews in Tuscany, see Valeria Galimi, *L'internamento in Toscana*, in Enzo Collotti (ed.), *Razza e fascismo. La persecuzione contro gli ebrei in Toscana (1938-1943)*, Rome, Carocci, 1999, pp. 524-538.

[27] On fascist civilian internment in Italy and for a general discussion of the living conditions in the internment camps of Bagno a Ripoli, Civitella della Chiana and Civitella del Tronto, see Carlo Spartaco Capogreco, *I campi del duce L'internamento civile nell'Italia fascista (1940-1943)*, Turin, Einaudi, 2004, especially pp. 182-185 and 210-211.

the Anglo-Libyan Jews were moved to the concentration camp of Fossoli di Carpi, from whence they were deported to the Aufenthslager of Bergen Belsen, Germany.[28] Here, the Anglo-Libyan Jews who were deported from Italy were transferred as "bargaining chips" to the internment camps in Germany (Liebenau and Biberach) and France (Vittel), where the Allied forces eventually liberated them. Although nearly all survived, the Anglo-Libyan Jews did not manage to repatriate to Libya until September 1945, that is, three years and eight months after leaving their homes.[29]

The third group of Jews to be interned was that composed of 2,584 Italian and Libyan Jews who resided in Cyrenaica; they were accused of having supported an enemy country during the first and second British occupations of the region.[30] Like the British Jews mentioned above, these Jews were deported in 1942: the PAI moved them to the internment camp of Giado (nowadays Jadu) in Tripolitania, where nearly six hundred of them died of malnutrition and typhus in the second half of January 1943, before the British 8th Army arrived.[31] When they were liberated, a further 500 prisoners were immediately hospitalised; the evacuation of the camp itself was only completed in October 1943, precisely because of the typhus epidemic.[32]

Finally, in June 1942, the fourth group affected by anti-Jewish measures was interned; it was composed of male Jews (Italian and Libyan) aged between 18 and 45 years, who were forced to work until the end of that year. Some three thousand Jews were interned in the forced labour camp of Sidi Azaz (nowadays Sidi Said), 350 of whom were next moved to that of Buqbuq to build roads connecting Libya and Egypt.[33]

[28] The Aufenthaltslager (a holding or residence camp) of Bergen Belsen was established in April 1943 and remained active until December 1944; it served to imprison Jews who were not meant to be killed but released and used as exchange objects because of their peculiar characteristics. For this purpose, 405 Jews were deported from Italy to the Aufenthaltslager of Bergen Belsen. Liliana Picciotto, *Ebrei turchi, libici e altri, deportati dall'Italia a Bergen Belsen*, "La rassegna mensile di Israel", September-December 2010, vol. 76, n. 3, pp. 243-259.

[29] L. Picciotto, *Ebrei turchi, libici e altri, deportati dall'Italia a Bergen Belsen*, cit., p. 255.

[30] In February 1942, Attilio Teruzzi (Minister of Italian Africa and a close collaborator of Mussolini) notified both Bastico and Ugo Cavallaro (Army Chief of Staff) of Mussolini's decision to deport and gather in a concentration camp in Tripolitania all the Jews of the Cyrenaica. M. Roumani, *Gli ebrei di Libia*, cit., p. 52, R. De Felice, *Ebrei in un paese arabo*, cit., pp. 273-274.

[31] On the internment camp of Giado, see Jens Hoppe, "Giado" in Geoffrey Megargee (ed.), *The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos, 1933-1945*, Vol. 3, *Camps and Ghettos Under European Regimes Aligned with Nazi Germany,* Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 2018, pp. 528-529.

[32] J. Hoppe, *The Persecution of Jews in Libya*, cit., pp. 63-64.

[33] On the forced labour camps of Sidi Azaz and Buqbuq, see Jens Hoppe, "Sidi Azaz" in G. Megargee (ed.), *The USHMM Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos*, cit., pp. 529-530; Jens Hoppe, "Buk Buk [Buq-buq]" in G. Megargee (ed.), *The USHMM Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos*, cit., pp. 527-528. M. Roumani, *Gli ebrei in Libia*, cit., p. 58; R. De Felice, *Ebrei in un paese arabo*, cit., pp. 275-276.

In January 1943, that is, a little over a month after the promulgation of the law that extended the racial legislation already in force in Italy to the whole of Libya, Tripoli's civil authorities handed the city over to the British General Bernard L. Montgomery. When the Allied arrived, the Libyan Jewish community was in an extremely precarious and uncomfortable situation: the result of the dismemberment provoked first by Italian racial and colonial policies, then by the war and the Italian-German alliance. Upon their return, the former prisoners and deportees — malnourished and suffering from serious infectious diseases — had to rebuild every aspect of community life, their homes and businesses having been looted or destroyed. However, the presence of the Jewish soldiers from Palestine who had joined the British army as volunteers marked a turning point.[34] In fact, they played a key role in mediating between the Jews and the British military administration in Libya, in particular with regard to the re-opening of community institutions, Jewish schools and pre-existing social clubs, especially in Tripoli. Yehiel Duvdevani, one of the Jewish soldiers of the Palestinian units active in Libya in that period, recalled the situation as follows:

> Instinctively, I guess, and without any conceptual or political preparation, in Libya we drew a conclusion that later took on a tangible expression: to eliminate the diaspora. That is, we saw the Jews coming home without a leadership, without educators for their children, without rabbis, without *yeshivot*, almost without Jewish schools, without Jewish teachers […] and talking to each other we came to the conclusion that these Jews had no meaning and no national logic that could save them in that desert. Everything had to be done to eliminate this diaspora and to take it to Eretz Israel. So we started working on the Jews in Libya: a very important economic support, on the one hand; schools, pioneering movements and attempts to evacuate Jews to Eretz Israel, on the other.[35]

Although the Zionist movement had been active in Libya ever since the 1920s, when the Libyan Jewry adhered to the Italian Zionist Federation, only very few decided to emigrate to Palestine before 1943.[36] In those years, the *Yishuv*

[34] On the Jews from Palestine who voluntarily joined the Allied army, see Yoav Gelber, *The Meeting Between the Jewish Soldiers from Palestine Serving in the British Army and the She'erit Hapletah*, in Gutman Israel, Saf Avital (eds.), *Sherith Hapletah, 1944-1948: Rehabilitation and Political Struggle, Proceedings of the Sixth Yad Vashem International Historical Conference (Jerusalem, October 1985)*, Jerusalem, Yad Vashem, 1990, pp. 60-79; Morris Beckman, *The Jewish Brigade. An Army with Two Masters (1944-1945)*, Staplehurst, Spellmount, 1998.

[35] Interview (in Hebrew) with Yehiel Duvdevani, 16 November 1965, in Oral History Division of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (OHD), (4) 70, Ha-Brichah, 7'31''-11'46''. Not to be confused with Baruch Duvdevani, a delegate of the Israeli government in Libya from March to December 1949.

[36] According to Roumani, prior to the birth of the State of Israel, the emigration from Libya had essentially been sporadic and only 500 Jews (mostly elderly people who wanted to spend the last years of their lives in Palestine) opted for the aliyah before 1943. M. Roumani, *Gli ebrei di Libia*, cit., p. 191. On Zionism in Libya see Rachel Simon, *The Social, Cultural and*

— in view of what was happening in Europe at the time — questioned its migration policy,[37] changing its parameters from a selective aliyah to a large-scale aliyah.[38] In this regard, the Jewish Agency started training and sending delegates (*schlichim*, singular *shaliach*) to the liberated areas of Europe, North Africa and the Middle East, with the aim of coordinating the process of preparing candidates for the aliyah and organising their departures, challenging the limits on Jewish emigration imposed by the British Mandate in Palestine via the White Paper of 1939.

The first two *shlichim* were Yair Duer and Zeev Katz, who arrived undercover in Libya in September 1943. Of Syrian and Romanian origin, respectively, Duer and Katz were affiliated with the left-wing, secular kibbutz movement Ha-Kibbutz Ha-Meuhad and were sent to Libya by the Mossad le-Aliyah Bet.[39] Duer and Katz had to tackle numerous difficulties, which in fact compromised their plans, especially those relating to the aliyah. In the first instance, they were faced with a decreasing number of candidates for emigration: at least during the first year of British administration, Libya's economic life undoubtedly benefited from this situation, allowing for an almost rapid recovery that raised vain hopes of a return to normality.[40] Secondly, conscious of the fact that Zionist propaganda would both cause unrest locally and have repercussions on the British Mandate for Palestine, the British military administration denied entry to all delegates, educators or teachers from Palestine.[41] A final factor that negatively impacted on Duer and Katz's mission was the need to balance their membership in a secular movement with the religious observance among the majority of Libyan Jewry. Nonetheless, the two *schlichim* decided to invest their energies in the foundation of a Zionist youth movement that, by performing educational and recreational activities, would help to instil in the young Jews of Libya the idea of the aliyah and the Zionist principles of self-realisation (*hagshamah atzmit*) through agricultural work and kibbutz life. The first unit (*gar'in*) of young pioneers, called "Bikurim" (first fruits) settled in a *hachsharah* near Tripoli in June 1944, thanks to the support of a third *shaliach* who arrived in February 1944: Naftali Bar-Ghiora, affiliated with a reli-

Political Impact of Zionism in Libya, "Jewish Political Studies Review", Fall 1994, vol. 6, n. 3/4, pp. 127-133.

[37] The Hebrew *Yishuv* refers to the Jewish settlement and its institutions in Palestine before the State of Israel was founded.

[38] For a complete overview of the *Yishuv*'s migratory policy in the context of war, see Dalia Ofer, *Escaping the Holocaust. Illegal Immigration to the Land of Israel, 1939-1944*, New York&Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1990, pp. 199-217.

[39] Rachel Simon, *Schlichim from Palestine in Libya*, "Jewish Political Studies Review", Spring 1997, vol. 9, n. 1/2, p. 38. For a history of the kibbutz movement in the twentieth century, see Henry Near, *The Kibbutz Movement. A History*, voll. 1-2, Portland (OR), The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2007.

[40] R. Simon, *Schlichim*, cit., p. 38; R. De Felice, *Ebrei in un paese arabo*, cit., pp. 285-290.

[41] R. De Felice, *Ebrei in un paese arabo*, cit., p. 289.

gious kibbutz movement (Ha-Kibbutz Ha-Dati).[42] Before returning to Palestine in July 1944, Bar-Ghiora and Duer prepared the necessary infrastructure to facilitate the mass emigration of Libyan Jews and trained some local Jews to continue their work after their departure.[43]

No *shaliach* was sent to Libya in the next two years, but these years led to a break that became definitive with the pogroms of 1945. As the economic situation worsened and the Libyan national movement — which wanted the country to become independent — took hold, the Arabs' attitude towards the local Jews changed: they started accusing the Jews of enriching themselves at the expense of the dramatic economic situation in Libya, which resulted in small yet repeated incidents. De Felice suggested that we must frame these episodes in a political context that was already in the process of changing, starting in 1943 when a number of pan-Islamic and nationalist groups began to exploit popular discontent and religious sentiment to gain consensus.[44] In July, certain anti-Jewish discourses by the *qadi* of the mosque of Homs and, in October, rumours that Jews had killed an Arab girl by throwing her into a well began to alarm the Jewish community and Arab leaders alike.[45] Yet, both were convinced that things would calm down if the economic situation improved. In early November 1945, several anti-Jewish incidents in Egypt were followed by a wave of violence in Tripoli. On 4 November, Zachino Habib — president of the local Jewish community — denounced the dangerous turn that the tensions between Arabs and Jews had taken in the country, but the British administration underestimated the situation. The fighting started that same day in various parts of Tripoli and spread to the neighbouring towns of Amrus, Tagiura, Zanzur, Zawia and Kussabat. What is known as the 1945 pogrom resulted in 130 deaths, 30 widows, 92 orphans, hundreds of wounded, whole families massacred and women raped.[46] The Jewish neighbourhoods were looted and destroyed, whereas two thousand people were forced to live in DP camps and about fourteen thousand needed full support to survive. According to the Jewish community, the occupation damages amounted to a total of 300 million lire.[47]

[42] For an overview of the Ha-Kibbutz Ha-Dati movement, see Yossi Katz, *The Religious Kibbutz Movement and Its Credo, 1935-48*, "Middle Eastern Studies", April 1995, vol. 31, n. 2, pp. 253-280.

[43] Katz was already back in Palestine by December 1943. R. Simon, *Schlichim,* cit., pp. 38-40.

[44] R. De Felice, *Ebrei in un paese arabo*, cit., pp. 291-294.

[45] Qadi, from the Arab "judge", is the office of the magistrate who administers justice according to Muslim canon law.

[46] M. Roumani, *Gli ebrei di Libia*, cit., pp. 82-88; For a general overview of people who were killed or went missing in the pogrom of 1945, see R. De Felice, *Ebrei in un paese arabo*, cit., p. 345, note 20.

[47] R. De Felice, *Ebrei in un paese arabo*, cit., pp. 295-297; on the responsibility, reactions and reparations of the British administration, see M. Roumani, *Gli ebrei di Libia*, cit., 86-90.

This violence marked a break with the past that propelled Libyan Jewry towards mass emigration to Palestine. A few months later, in 1946, the Mossad le-Aliyah Bet sent a new *shaliach* to Libya: Israel Gur, also known as "the uncle". Following the model developed in Palestine by the clandestine resistance movements, Gur primarily devoted himself to the training of small defence groups *(haganah*) that obtained their weapons on the black market.[48] Moreover, by liaising with the European headquarters of the Mossad le-Aliyah Bet, Gur focused on organising the clandestine aliyah in an attempt to move individuals or small groups to DP camps in Italy and France, where they would receive assistance from Jewish aliyah organisations. Between 1946 and 1948, a few hundred Libyan Jews easily obtained visas to travel to Italy for business, health or study reasons in the *yeshivot* or vocational schools, but many more managed to reach their final destination in Palestine before Gur was forced to leave Libya in the first half of 1947.[49]

Immediately after the proclamation of the State of Israel, between 12 and 13 June 1948, Tripoli was again struck by violent anti-Jewish incidents.[50] This time, though, the self-defence training that the Libyan Jews had received from the *shlichim*, and especially from Gur, proved fundamental in limiting the damage. The Jews reacted to the attacks (similar to those of 1945) by driving the attackers away, while the police — on this occasion — intervened only a few hours after the violence began. The Jewish community of Tripoli eventually suffered 14 losses.[51] This incident was the tipping point of a chain of events and circumstances that changed the fortunes of Libyan Jewry forever. The anti-Jewish persecutions under the Italian government, the war in North Africa, the difficult recovery during the British military administration, the rise of Arab nationalism and the failure to be recognised as a minority in Libya's independence process forced the Libyan Jews to make a choice: staying or leaving the country.

"The need for emigration and resettlement for these Jews is obvious": the Jewish organisations and their assistance of the Libyan Jews in Italy

The anti-Jewish violence of June 1948 pushed the JDC — which until then had focused its efforts on the Jewish communities in Europe and the Jewish DPs in the refugee camps of Germany, Austria and Italy — to intensify its assistance programmes for the Jewish communities in Libya, and more generally in

[48] R. Simon, *Schlichim*, cit., pp. 41-42; R. De Felice, *Ebrei in un paese arabo*, cit., p. 318.
[49] M. Roumani, *Gli ebrei di Libia*, cit., pp. 199-201.
[50] R. De Felice, *Ebrei in un paese arabo*, cit., pp. 319-332.
[51] M. Roumani, *Gli ebrei di Libia*, cit., pp. 91-97.

the whole of North Africa.[52] Already in 1945, the JDC guaranteed the Tripoli community a monthly grant of one million dollars that was distributed in the form of an individual subsidy, which was increased by five million dollars after June 1948. Nonetheless, the JDC's representative in North Africa Hélène Cazès-Benatar announced the decision to set up its offices on the spot and to define a direct assistance plan for the Jews in Libya. Not without difficulties, Cazès-Benatar strove to form a local executive office. The Tripoli community had been debating this issue for some time without reaching an agreement when its former president, Ruben Hassan, offered to lead the JDC's mission in Tripoli as a volunteer. Thus, three offices were established for the aliyah (one in Tripoli, one in Cyrenaica, and one in the rural areas surrounding the two regions), whereas canteen services, schools and care services for children, the elderly and the sick were enhanced; for this reason, the JDC further increased the budget to 25 million dollars per month.[53]

Starting in the second half of 1948, the situation of the Tripoli Jews became an object of discussion also in the Italian offices of the JDC; according to the latter, hundreds of Libyan Jews had entered the peninsula's DP camps since the summer of that year. In the quarterly report of October-December 1948, the Director of JDC in Italy, Louis Horwitz, expressed his concern about new "infiltrators" from Tripoli: if at the end of November there were 350 of them, after about a month their number had almost doubled.[54]

The Jews arrived from Libya at a time in which the JDC planned to substantially reduce its programmes in Italy following the migration policies of the Israeli government, which in 1948 gave priority to the refugees held in the camps of Germany, Austria and Italy.[55] Yet, after visiting Libya several times and, especially, deeming it impossible for an independent Libyan state to guarantee the rights of the Jewish minority, the JDC officially expressed itself in favour of the Libyan Jews' emigration:

> It can hardly be said that a solution for this unfortunate Community can be found in the country of its origin. The need for emigration and resettlement for these Jews is obvious from the dark period of their sufferings and from the present miserable position in Tripolitania.[56]

[52] Letter from Robert Pilpel to Mr Robert S. Marcus, 3 September 1948, in AJDC, G 45-54/4/23/3/LY.16, Tripolitania: Jewish Community. 1947-1950, 1954.

[53] Letter from Loeb and Troper to Dr. Joseph J. Schwartz, 12 May 1950, in AJDC, G 45-54/4/23/1/LY.1, Tripolitania: Audited Reports 1949-1954.

[54] Letter from Louis D. Horwitz to Jacob Joslow, Subject, 15 February 1949, in AJDC, NY AR194554/4/44/2/625 Italy, General, 1949.

[55] For an analysis of Israeli migration policy in the early years of the State and the difficult process of absorbing immigrants, see Dvora Hacohen, *Immigrants in Turmoil. Mass Immigration to Israel and Its Repercussions in the 1950s and After*, Syracuse, Syracuse University Press, 2013.

[56] The Plight of the Tripolitanian Jews, 1 December 1948, in AJDC, G 45-54/4/23/4/LY.31, Tripolitania: Tripoli 1948-1949.

Other international Jewish organisations joined the JDC, including the Central British Fund (hereafter CBF),[57] one of the most active Jewish organisations in the assistance of the Jewish refugees since the 1930s. In a report dated January 1949, the CBF delegate Ben Segal — following a visit to Tripoli — contradicted the information that the British administration had disseminated on the alleged "good conditions" of the local Jewish community; he claimed that this idea was conditioned by the massive intervention of numerous charitable organisations that were active among the local Jews, which had no counterparts among the Arab population. Like Horwitz, Segal considered mass emigration the solution to the problem of the Libyan Jews and suggested that priority be given to children, whose proportion was "extraordinary".[58] In his report, Segal observed that there were 250 children per 370 adults in the country's rural areas:

> I was impressed by the natural brightness and adaptability of the Jewish children, and I regard them as good pioneering material. The majority of Jewish parents will gladly allow their children to emigrate, largely in the hope that they will reach Israel.[59]

Segal furthermore mentioned that, in 1948, about sixty children had already travelled from Libya to Italy; here, the Organization for Rehabilitation through Training (hereafter ORT) — a Jewish organisation specialised in vocational training and already active among the Jewish communities and the Jewish DPs in Europe — had previously organised educational programmes for 300 to 400 children aged 12 to 15 years. The CBF delegate reported that, in Libya, 2,000 applications instantly arrived for inclusion in the first group of 50 children who would have participated in the ORT programme and who would have left Tripoli on 16 January 1949. Segal concluded his report by recommending a large-scale (4,000-5,000) relocation of children and indicating Italy as the main evacuation country, where the infrastructures already in place for the European refugees would have guaranteed an adequate preparation and education for the aliyah.[60]

In fact, at the end of December 1948, the JDC already recorded the arrival in Italy of some hundred Jewish children from Tripoli, "healthy and happy children all of whom are anxious to go to Palestine", and expected

[57] Nowadays known as the World Jewish Relief, the Central British Fund was founded in 1933 by a group of British Jews (including Anthony de Rothschild, Leonard G. Montefiore and Otto Schiff) in response to the refugee crisis arising from the anti-Semitic propaganda and persecutions in Germany.

[58] Letter from Harry Vitales to Paris, 6 February 1949, in AJDC, JER 44-52/4/4/1/JER.868, Middle East: Jews in Moslem Countries Reports 1947-1949.

[59] Letter from Dr. Joseph Schwartz, 7 February 1949, in AJDC, G 45-54/4/23/3/LY.22, Tripolitania: Program Reports 1946-1954.

[60] Letter from Dr. Joseph Schwartz, 7 February 1949, in AJDC, cited in note 60; Letter from Harry Vitales to Paris, 6 February 1949, in AJDC, cited in note 59.

that another group of some hundred minors would arrive very soon.[61] In this regard, James Rice — from the JDC's Geneva office — informed Moses W. Beckelman (deputy chairman of the JDC's European headquarters in Paris) that he had spoken to Mrs Lane from the IRO; the latter had reassured him that her agency would have taken on the responsibility of assisting both the children who had already arrived and those who were yet to arrive from Libya in case the latter "should turn up mysteriously in Italy". Mrs Lane, Rice added in his letter to Beckelman, claimed that other IRO officers would also have collaborated because they were "most sympathetic to the Israeli movement":

> Mrs. Lane said further that we should not worry about any technical decision on eligibility by IRO Geneva. She was sure that in Italy they would find a way to get around any unfavourable decision. In other words: "eligibility-shmeligibility".[62]

Rice furthermore shared details of a hilarious conversation with the IRO staff in Switzerland, in which they had speculated about the conditions of the Tripoli children on their arrival in Italy:

> Just how the children had arrived from Tripoli, Mrs. Lane was unable to say. Miss Dickinson had implied that perhaps they had walked across the water. I told Mrs. Lane that since these were Jewish children, it was more likely that the waters of the Mediterranean had parted in the Biblical tradition of the Red Sea episode.[63]

We can trace references to the Jews' methods of reaching Italy in some eye-witness accounts, like that of Haim Fedlon, a Jew from Tripoli who had been trained by the *shaliach* Israel Gur. In a 1987 interview, Fedlon described how he had become an activist, in his early twenties, in the clandestine operations to collect arms for the *Yishuv* and in the organisation of the illegal aliyah from Libya.[64] Fedlon confessed having met representatives of the Jewish Agency during a business trip to Italy in 1947, among whom David Golding, a depart-

[61] Letter from James P. Rice to Mr M.W. Beckelman, 14 December 1948, in AJDC, G 45-54/4/23/4/LY.31.

[62] "Eligible" is the technical term that was used to indicate those meeting the requirements for receiving assistance from the IRO. In this case, James Rice of the JDC added the prefix "shm-", which in American slang is used to give a word a Hebrew sound, or to suggest that the word has no meaning for the person who pronounces it. Letter from James P. Rice to Mr M.W. Beckelman, 14 December 1948, in AJDC, cited in note 57.

[63] Letter from James P. Rice to Mr M.W. Beckelman, 14 December 1948, in AJDC, cited in note 62.

[64] Haim Fedlon, aka "Ciccio", was born in 1922 in Tripoli, where he first studied in the Italian school "Pietro Verri" and, after the racial laws were introduced, in the Jewish school "Hatikva". Having grown up in a family that spoke Hebrew and attended local Zionist circles, he emigrated to Israel in 1949 and became a *shaliah* for the Jewish Agency in Egypt.

mental delegate of the Aliyat Ha-No'ar,[65] and Ada Sereni of the Mossad le-Aliyah Bet,[66] with whom he had discussed the possibility of transferring children and young adults from Tripoli to Italy to prepare them for the aliyah in the *hachsharot*.[67] According to Fedlon, between the end of 1948 and 1949, at least four hundred minors illegally travelled from Tripoli to Sicily (often to Siracusa, or nearby); from there they were distributed across the peninsula's DP camps and *hachsharot*. Fedlon recalled having waited in Siracusa for the first group of children, who were housed on straw mattresses in one of the local schools, closed for the Christmas holidays:

> Other captains of fishing vessels realised that there was money to be made in Pachino, so they took their boots and brought over more groups, 50, 30 [people], as many as they could take. They started to transport pregnant women, elderly people […] not like us, who had brought only girls and boys. It didn't matter who they were: whoever could afford to pay 5,000 lire for the trip was taken to Pachino.[68]

The Jews who arrived from Libya in the last four months of 1948 were absorbed into the *hachsharot*, but since the arrivals increased in number, the Palestine Office started pressuring the JDC to grant assistance to the Libyans as well.[69] At the end of 1948, the two organisations reached an agreement: the Palestinian Office would have continued managing "all the normal DP population" (i.e. all European Jewish DPs) independently by gathering them in six *hachsharot*, whereas the remaining six *hachsharot* located near Rome would be designated to receive the Libyan Jews, whom the Palestinian Office would have managed under the JDC's supervision. Finally, two Children's Homes (i.e. *hachsharot* for children) would remain operational to accommodate the minors

[65] Founded in Berlin in 1933, the Aliyat Ha-No'ar helped Jewish children in the Third Reich by relocating them to Palestine. It subsequently became a department of the Jewish Agency. On its assistance to Jewish refugees in Europe after the war, see Shlomo Bar-Gil, Mehapsim Bait Motz'im Moledet, *Aliyat Ha-No'ar Ba-Hinukh u-Ba-Shikum Ha-Sherith Ha-Pletah 1945-1955* [Seeking a home, finding a homeland: the Youth Aliyah between the education and the rehabilitation of Holocaust survivors 1945-1948], Yad Itzhaq Ben Zvi, Jerusalem, 1999.

[66] Ada Sereni played a crucial role in the Mossad le-Aliyah Bet, which took some twenty-three thousand Jewish refugees from Italy to Palestine between 1945 and 1948. Ada Sereni, *I clandestini del mare, l'emigrazione ebraica in terra d'Israele dal 1945 al 1948*, Mursia, Milan, 1973.

[67] This event is also described in M. Roumani, *Gli ebrei di Libia*, cit, p. 199 and in Yacov Haggiag-Liluf, *Toldot Yehudei Luv*, Or-Yehuda, Bat Yam, 2000, p. 138, published in Italy under the title *Storia degli ebrei di Libia*, Centro di studi sull'ebraismo libico, 2005.

[68] Interview (in Hebrew) with Haim Fedlon, 1987, in OHD, (187) 7, The Jews of Libya, 1:28:38-1:29:10.

[69] The Palestinian Office (or Merkaz He-Halutz) refers to the institution founded by Palestinian Jewish soldiers in 1944 to coordinate assistance to Jewish refugees in Italy and to organise their aliyah. Over time, the Palestinian Office became increasingly political, especially after the arrival of the *schlichim* and representatives of various Zionist and religious movements of the *Yishuv*, and when it was given the task to manage the country's *hachsharot.*

coming from Libya; at that time, these were the only Jewish children to be found in the Italian DP camps because the European displaced children were the first to have been emigrated to Israel.[70]

The JDC had to face two issues in its management of the Libyan Jews in the Italian DP camps. The first regarded the health of the newcomers, who were often infected with tuberculosis, trachoma and other contagious diseases, and were therefore declared unsuitable for emigration, "an additional burden on the shoulders of JDC".[71] The second was linked to the difficult task — not only of the JDC but also other Jewish organisations — to have the IRO grant the Jews coming from Libya the status of displaced persons. Only thus could they obtain international assistance for their subsistence in DP camps and for resettlement, like their European co-religionists who were already recognised as DPs because they had been victims of persecution during the war.

With regard to the Libyan Jews' health conditions, the JDC approached the matter on several fronts. In first instance, steps were taken to solve or at least contain the health emergency in Libya. At the start of 1949, the JDC and the OSE (Oeuvre de Secours aux Enfants) sent a committee to Tripoli to study the problem and set up a medical and health programme for the local population in view of their evacuation to Israel.[72] On that occasion, the OSE estimated a very high disease rate as well as an exceptionally high infant and general mortality rate. Moreover, the majority of Jews suffering from diseases did not have access to medical care, whereas the sanitary conditions were extremely poor. For this reason, the JDC launched — as early as March 1949 — a programme in conjunction with the OSE for the registration and mass examination of all the candidates for the aliyah. By 1952, when the health programme in Libya was closed, the OSE's staff had examined an average of 150 to 200 people a day, for a total of 31,661 Jews during 33 months of activity. Yet, the OSE and the JDC encountered various difficulties in their attempt to accelerate the process of direct emigration from Libya to Israel: while many refused to depart if a family member had not yet been recognised as suitable for emigration for medical reasons, others (usually the head of the family) did not want to leave their jobs to obtain the necessary medical treatment. Finally, the Israeli government itself refused entry to those who were not entirely healthy. Although these

[70] Letter from Louis D. Horwitz to Jacob Joslow, Subject, 15 February 1949, in AJDC, cited in note 55.

[71] Reduction of the JDC program in Italy, 18 January 1949, in AJDC, NY AR194554/4/44/2/625 Italy, General, 1949.

[72] The OSE was founded in Russia in 1912. Initially called the "Society for the Health of the Jewish Population", in the 1930s it moved its headquarters to France and changed its name to "Oeuvre de Secours aux Enfants", as it was then committed to protecting and caring for children during the war. After the war, when the OSE established an office in Italy, it became known as the Jewish Health Organization (Organizzazione Sanitaria ebraica). On the OSE and the JDC's health programme in Libya, see M. Roumani, *Gli ebrei di Libia*, cit., pp. 121-131.

difficulties considerably postponed the aliyah, the JDC worked hard to liaise with the Israeli authorities and obtain a shorter time frame for the emigration of those who had recovered from illness in both Libya and Italy.[73]

In Italy, too, the precarious health of the Libyan Jews weighed heavily on the JDC: it not only had to provide for their medical care, but it also had to ensure that the DPs who were perfectly entitled to emigrate would not be exposed to the risk of infection. Between January and June 1949, the JDC's officers in Italy still recorded thousands of arrivals from Tripoli, "despite repeated instruction to the Palestine Office that AJDC would not take care of new arrivals".[74] Indeed, for months to come Italy remained one of the privileged channels for the aliyah, even when the new *schlichim* — Barukh Duvdevani and Max Varadi — were preparing the direct emigration from Libya.[75] Thus, at the end of the summer of 1949, the JDC decided to change its strategy; instead of distributing the arrivals from Tripoli across the *hachsharot*, as it had done until then, it divided them into two groups. Those in need of further medical treatment were relocated to the transit camps of Marseilles,[76] whereas those healthy enough for the aliyah were all housed in a single transit camp in Resina (nowadays Ercolano), near Naples.[77] Between July and September 1949, 2,393 of the 3,052 North African Jews (mostly Libyans) who passed through Italy emigrated to Israel, while 659 of them were relocated to Marseilles. In the same quarterly period, though, about two hundred people stayed in the Resina camp — mostly relatives of tuberculosis patients who were being treated in the JDC's facilities and who were entitled to assistance for the full duration of their stay.[78]

In the short time of its existence (September-November 1949), the transit camp of Resina raised quite a few concerns, especially after a letter was delivered — at the end of November — to Mrs Adele Rosenwald Levy, a board member of the JDC and chair of the National Women's Division of the United Jewish Appeal (hereafter UJA).[79] The letter was written by a friend of Levy,

[73] Letter from Louis D. Horwitz to Jacob Joslow, Subject, 15 February 1949, in AJDC, cited in note 55.

[74] Ajdc activities in Italy, January-March 1949, 23 June 1949; Ajdc activities in Italy, April-June 1949, 29 August 1949, in AJDC, cited in note 16.

[75] On the activities of the *schlichim* among the Jews of Libya between 1949 and 1951, see Maurice M. Roumani, *The Jews of Libya: Coexistence, Persecution, Resettlement*, Brighton and Portland, Sussex Academic Press, 2009, pp. 141-153.

[76] On the contrasts between the activities of Zionist organisations and pan-Arab anti-colonial movements in Marseilles in 1948, see Maud S. Mandel, *Muslim and Jews in France. History of a Conflic*t, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2014, pp. 15-34.

[77] Ajdc activities in Italy, July-September 1949, 23 November 1949, in AJDC, cited in note 16.

[78] Ajdc activities in Italy, July-September 1949, 23 November 1949, in AJDC, cited in note 16

[79] The United Jewish Appeal for Refugees and Overseas Needs was founded in 1939 by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, the United Palestine Appeal and the National Coordinating Committee Fund, with the purpose of joining forces to assist the Jews in Europe and in Palestine.

Ellen Conreid, after she had visited the Resina camp:

Dear Mrs. Levy,
I've been in Europe for the last few weeks, and have been in Naples the last few days. Today I visited transit Camp Resina […]. I think the memory of that camp will haunt me the rest of my life! The conditions there are inconceivably atrocious! […] No concentration camp in Germany could have been worse, nor as far as any documentary films that I have seen, was any worse! The place was a factory — no heat — today was cold and rainy — children running around in bare feet, in rags — no warm clothing for old or young — they aren't given any […]. It is horrible beyond belief.[80]

Convinced that the UJA could not have afforded a similar situation, Conreid asked Levy to intervene, and Levy demanded an explanation from the JDC. After a heated exchange of letters between the JDC's offices in New York, Paris and Rome, a month later Louis Horwitz replied providing a detailed report that countered Conreid's letter of disappointment. Horwitz explained that the Resina camp had been opened to tackle the emergency of arrivals from North Africa and that, even if the Palestinian Office — which was responsible for the camp — had acted quickly to find accommodation, the only available place at the time was the factory of Resina.[81] Moreover, Horwitz underscored the fact that, when compared to other DP camps, Resina was in a fair condition, that no building or house in southern Italy was equipped with heating, and that the North African Jews themselves had requested and received a subsidy of 300 lire per day to buy and prepare food instead of using the catering service as planned. Horwitz furthermore specified that

the North Africans have their own mode of living and it was not possible within the short space of time they were in Italy, to alter any of their habits […] the children running around barefeet was not so much due to the lack of clothing but the fact that it was no doubt a habit of the children to go without shoes in North Africa.[82]

After a few months, the Italian government made a former hospital in Brindisi available, and already at the end of November, the JDC arranged the transfer of the North African refugees from the Resina transit camp, which was closed permanently.[83] The transit camp in Brindisi, which on 20 December 1949 accommo-

[80] Letter from AJDC New York to AJDC Paris, 22 November 1949, in AJDC, G 45-54/4/13/14/IT.115, Italy: Resina Camp 1949-1950. The emphasis is in the original, where Levy is called by her husband's name: Mrs David M. Levy.

[81] Letter from AJDC Rome to Mr Melvin S. Goldstein, 28 December 1949, in AJDC, G 45-54/4/13/14/IT.115, Italy: Resina Camp 1949-1950; Letter from M.W. Beckelman to Mr Moses A. Leavitt, 9 January 1950, in AJDC, G 45-54/4/13/14/IT.115, Italy: Resina Camp 1949-1950; Letter from Melvin S. Goldstein to Mr M.W. Beckelman, 28 November 1949, in AJDC, G 45-54/4/13/14/IT.115, Italy: Resina Camp 1949-1950.

[82] Letter from AJDC Rome to Mr Melvin S. Goldstein, 28 December 1949, in AJDC, cited in note 82.

[83] Ajdc activities in Italy, July-September 1949, 23 November 1949, in AJDC, cited in note 16.

dated 961 people, was again managed by the Palestinian Office; until that month, 3,000 North African Jewish refugees (Libyans and Egyptians) had passed through the camp, who had already been transferred to Marseilles or emigrated to Israel.[84]

The issue of international recognition: displaced persons or migrants?

Correspondence between the JDC's offices in Rome, Geneva and Paris reveals that the issue of eligibility for the Libyan Jews' international assistance had already been presented to Myer Cohen, assistant director-general of the IRO's Health, Care and Maintenance Department, in December 1948. However, Cohen took a long time to respond.[85] The issue had become urgent when Horwitz informed the JDC's headquarters in Paris of an unannounced IRO inspection of two DP camps where some Jews from Tripoli had initially been housed; the UN's agency subsequently deprived the Jews of international assistance because they did not fall into the displaced persons category.[86] If James Rice, director of the JDC in Switzerland, had initially seen a glimmer of hope in his interaction with Mrs Lane from the IRO's welfare office, who declared to be "very interested in this problem" and gave the impression that her opinion would have had a considerable effect on Myer Cohen, it soon became evident that the Jews arriving from Libya would have been classified as migrants, not as DPs fleeing from persecution.[87] Indeed, the IRO officials were so overwhelmed by this flow of migrants towards Italy that the Italian head of mission, G.F. Mentz, raised the issue with the British Embassy on 15 December 1948:

> Several hundred persons from North Africa have recently arrived in Italy and have applied to IRO for assistance. [They came from] the Libyan Coast between Tripoli and Benghazi, where they were occupied as traders, builders, etc. They are dressed without exception in Arab costume, very few can speak anything but Arabic, and the great majority appear to be illiterate, with little or no education. There is a high percentage of young children under 12 years of age […]. They seem to have embarked at Tripoli or Benghazi at intervals, some in group and others as single families and to have disembarked at various places in the Naples area or at Syracusa in Sicily. Landing appears to have taken place at night, so that no one is aware of the precise place, and on arrival on Italian soil they were apparently met by representatives of Jewish committees and given rail tickets to various destinations.[88]

[84] Excerpts from the Quarterly Report on the Italian for the period October-December. 1949, 1 December 1949, in AJDC, NY AR194554/4/44/2/625, Italy, General, 1949.

[85] Letter from James P. Rice to Mr L.D. Horwitz, 23 December 1948, in AJCD, G 45-54/4/23/4/LY.31, Tripolitania: Tripoli 1948-1949.

[86] AJDC Activities in Italy October-December 1948, 15 February 1949, in AJDC, NY AR194554/4/44/2/625, Italy, General, 1949.

[AJDC] Activities in Italy October-December 1948, 15 February 1949, in AJDC, cited in note 87.

[87] Letter from James P. Rice to Mr L.D. Horwitz, 23 December 1948, in AJCD, cited in note 86.

[88] International Refugee Organization Italy to the British Embassy in Rome, 15 December 1948, in Archives Nationales (AN), Paris, AJ 43/1036 Italie. Refugies Juifs en Italie 1947-48.

Mentz highlighted that those who had been interviewed in the IRO's Italian offices had justified their leaving Africa as "the desire to avoid Arab persecution"; some had also claimed to have lost family members, whereas one man even showed a wound he had sustained during the clashes, when an Arab had stabbed him. According to the IRO, though, the general picture that emerged from the interviews was one of "sporadic Arab attacks on Jewish communities in Libya, with occasional outburst on a larger and graver scale, and of the police forces being unable or unwilling to afford the Jews protection". Since all those who had been interviewed by the IRO up to that point had expressed a desire to emigrate to Israel, Mentz requested information from official sources to establish whether the Libyan Jews fell within the IRO's mandate.[89]

At the end of 1948, Horwitz prepared a report titled "The Plight of the Tripolitanian Jews" to draw the IRO's attention to the case. He stressed the fact that the Italian occupation, while having "introduced civilization", had gradually deteriorated Jewish life as a result of the introduction of the racial laws. Horwitz highlighted that, when the Germans occupied North Africa in 1942, "the virus of German anti-Semitic propaganda was generously and skilfully instilled among local Arabs that bore its sad and tragic fruits after the liberation", manifesting itself in the explosion of violence of the pogroms of 1945. The director of the JDC's mission in Italy was convinced that the Libyan Jews' situation was a direct consequence of those disastrous years. In this atmosphere of constant terror, their community never managed to develop a reconstruction programme and was still in a precarious condition, of which the Arabs — Horwitz argued — had "took great advantage [exercising] moral pressure, threats and blackmail" to extort a public declaration of solidarity with the Libyan National Unity Front. Although the British administration and representatives of the Muslim community had guaranteed peace and freedom for the Jews in Libya after the violence of 1945, Horwitz pointed out that the violence, which could not be considered an isolated case, had re-emerged in June 1948, permanently compromising the "millenary cohabitation" between Muslims and the Jewish minority in the country.[90] The JDC therefore claimed that the Jews were forced to leave Libya for fear of being persecuted:

> Indeed it appears to A.J.D.C that the fate of Tripolitanian Jews who succeed in reaching Italy must be considered within the same framework of the assistance extended by IRO to other DPs from whom they only differ by the mere facts that they have become displaced only at a later stage but by exactly the same causes rooted in war events. Their present plight therefore is nothing but the direct outcome of antisemitic and racial propaganda in an Axis ruled territory during the war.[91]

[89] International Refugee Organization Italy to the British Embassy in Rome, 15 December 1948, in AN, cited in note 89.

[90] The Plight of the Tripolitanian Jews, 1 December 1948, in AJDC, cited in note 57.

[91] The Plight of the Tripolitanian Jews, 1 December 1948, in AJDC, cited in note 57.

While waiting for the IRO's decision, the JDC took full responsibility for providing the Libyan Jews with all the necessary aid and paying the costs of the *hachsharot* in which they were staying.[92] Together with the Alliance Israelite Universelle and the World Jewish Congress, the CBF too supported the JDC's request to the IRO to grant eligibility for international assistance to the Jews fleeing from Tripoli.[93] Nevertheless, despite the efforts and the cooperation, the IRO rejected this proposal, as the JDC wrote in its report on the January-March 1949 trimester.[94]

My analysis of the screening of Libyan Jews in Italy through their applications and the IRO's interviews with the Jews reveals how difficult it was for the UN's officials to establish whether they could be considered displaced persons. It turns out that only two candidates out of a sample of 42 applications examined for this essay were already in Italy (for study) in 1947, whereas all other candidates arrived between the beginning of 1948 and September 1949, with the final aim of emigrating to Israel.[95] Many had to wait up to six months before they received a decision on their application, which in most cases arrived after 27 May 1949, when the IRO sent out a telegram in which it determined that Libyan Jews in the Italian DP camps were not entitled to international assistance. Indeed, with the exception of three candidates, nearly all were declared "ineligible", that is, not meeting the requirements for DP status as per the international standards of the time.

The IRO's refusal to take responsibility for helping the Libyan Jews is striking when we consider two categories in particular: unaccompanied minors and former deportees, who in these circumstances were not officially considered such.[96] In fact, exactly half of the applications analysed here concern people under 16 years of age, who all (except for one) arrived in Italy without relatives. Some of these, such as Clara G. (13 years) and Mino M. (15 years), were even registered as "war orphans" by the very IRO officers who inter-

[92] AJDC Activities in Italy October-December 1948, 15 February 1949, in AJDC, cited in note 87.

[93] Letter from Harry Vitales to Paris, 6 February 1949, in AJDC, cited in note 59.

[94] Ajdc activities in Italy, January-March 1949, 23 June 1949, in AJDC, cited in note 16.

[95] This essay draws on an analysis of 42 applications presented to the IRO by Jews from Libya who stayed in Italy between 1948 and 1949. These documents are held in the International Tracing Service (ITS) archive in Bad Arolsen, Germany. The Allied and the International Committee of the Red Cross established the ITS at the end of the war with the aim of tracing down people who had went missing in the conflict.

[96] The IRO included the following children in the "unaccompanied children" category: children under 16 years of age who were outside their country of origin or that of their parents; orphans; and children whose parents had abandoned them or had gone missing. On the approach to minors in the post-war period in international humanitarianism, see Tara Zahra, *I figli perduti. La ricostruzione delle famiglie europee nel secondo dopoguerra*, Milan, Feltrinelli, 2012.

viewed them: Clara's parents were killed during wartime bombings,[97] whereas Mino lost his in the Tripoli pogrom of 1945.[98] In November 1948, both arrived in Italy with the help of the religious Zionist movement Mizrahi, which accommodated them in the children's *hachsharah* of Villa Orvieto, in Florence. Other minors, such as the two 16-year-olds Haim Z. (from Bengasi)[99] and Rahmin G. (from Tripoli),[100] claimed that their parents had entrusted them to Zionist organisations (among which precisely the Mizrahi and the Aliyat Ha-No'ar). They were to be educated in Italy in the *hachsharot* of the movements to which they belonged (near Rome, in Genazzano, Grottaferrata, Monte Mario and in Salerno), before they would subsequently be sent to Israel. Giving priority to childrens' aliyah was actually a common practice among Jewish families in Europe from the 1930s onwards. For instance, in Italy, once the concentration camp of Ferramonti di Tarsia was liberated in 1943, many DP parents sent their children to the *hachsharot* run by the Palestinian Office, which they saw as an opportunity to offer their children a better future in another country while meeting all their basic needs (from the most practical ones, such as food, medical treatment and clothing, to education).[101] Hence, despite the fact that the 20 candidates from Libya, many of whom were orphans or unaccompanied minors, were no more than 16 years old and in a different country from their own, the IRO recognised them as neither displaced persons nor unaccompanied children; after more than six months, it simply stamped "ineligible" on their applications.

Surprisingly, the same stamp was applied to the candidatures of some Libyan Jews who had been deported to Giado and the European concentration camps. Among the Jews from Benghazi who were held in the Giado camp, including Leoni D.,[102] Zarina T. (a widow who had given birth during internment),[103] Giulia

[97] File on Clara G., in International Tracing Service Digital Archive (ITS), Bad Arolsen, 3.2.1.2/80374095, Iro care and maintenance program: Files originated in Italy.

[98] File on Mino M., in ITS, 3.2.1.2/80434965, Iro care and maintenance program: Files originated in Italy.

[99] File on Haim Z., in ITS, 3.2.1.2/80482517, Iro care and maintenance program: Files originated in Italy.

[100] File on Rahmin G., in ITS, 3.2.1.2/80373615, Iro care and maintenance program: Files originated in Italy.

[101] I am referring to the relief programmes of organisations that were active during and after the war, such as the Kindertransport, the Œuvre de secours aux enfants, and the Aliyat Ha-no'ar. On DP children in the *hachsharot* in Italy between 1943 and 1948, see Chiara Renzo, *"To Build and Be Built": Jewish Displaced Children and Youth in Post-War Italy, 1943-48*, in Beatrice Scutaru, Simone Paoli (eds.), *Child Migration and Biopolitics. Old and New Experiences in Europe*, London, Routledge, 2020, pp. 105-123.

[102] File on Leoni D., in ITS, 3.2.1.2/80359024, Iro care and maintenance program: Files originated in Italy.

[103] File on Zarina T., in ITS, 3.2.1.2/ 80526972, Iro care and maintenance program: Files originated in Italy.

D. and her family,[104] and Abraham F.,[105] only the last managed to obtain legal protection and assistance from the IRO, which got him housed in a DP camp in Italy. However, this decision seems to have been determined by the impression Abraham F. apparently made on the IRO officer who interviewed him; the officer justified the granted concession by the fact that Abraham F. came across as an "honest looking man, who seems to have stood the situation as long as possible". The promptness with which the practice was closed is also relevant, as the IRO officer made the decision on the same day of the candidate's presentation of his application (26 June 1948), more than a year before the IRO officially decided against the eligibility of the North African Jews.

To offer further proof of the uncertain decision-making tools that the IRO's operators were equipped with and of the weight of their personal judgement, at least in the first phase of the screening process, let us look at the candidature of Joseph N.[106] and Leone G.[107] The former was a Tripoli Jew who had left Libya in 1940 to undergo surgery in Romania, from where he was deported first to Transnistria (in 1941), and then to the Nazi camp of Ebensee (in 1943); the latter, by contrast, was a Greek Jew living in Tripoli, whom the Fascist government had transferred to Italy in 1940, where he was forced into free internment (in Montecatini and Amatrice) and subsequently moved to the Fossoli concentration camp before being deported to various death camps (including Auschwitz and Mauthausen). Joseph N. told the IRO's operators that, along with his wife and children, he had been moved to the Austrian DP camp of Linz after the war, and that he had reached Italy in 1947, where he had lived in the DP camps run by the JDC. Leone G., on the other hand, showed the IRO officer the tattoo on his forearm as proof of his internment in Auschwitz, declared that his family had been killed in the concentration camps and stated that he had returned to Italy in August 1945, earning his living as a street vendor. Joseph N., who had requested assistance for resettlement to Israel with his family on 12 March 1948, received an odd response from the IRO officer who had interviewed him: he was declared "eligible for repatriation to Tripoli, if resettlement not possible", an assessment that was changed, four days later, to "eligible for repatriation only, if not accepted he is not the concern of IRO". Leone G., who had asked for legal protection, a temporary subsidy in Italy and coverage of the travel expenses for resettlement to Canada or Australia, was granted assistance to be repatriated to Greece (where he had never lived) or

[104] File on Giulia D., in ITS, 3.2.1.2/80359031, Iro care and maintenance program: Files originated in Italy.

[105] File on Abraham F., in ITS, 3.2.1.2/80363242, Iro care and maintenance program: Files originated in Italy.

[106] File on Joseph N., in ITS, 3.2.1.2/ 80441179, Iro care and maintenance program: Files originated in Italy.

[107] File on Leone G., in ITS, 3.2.1.2/80373378, Iro care and maintenance program: Files originated in Italy.

Libya (where he refused to be repatriated for fear of persecution). In this case, too, the IRO officer who had interviewed Leone G. — on 12 July 1948 — was unable to make an immediate decision because they believed that "there is a lot of moonshine in this man's story". In fact, they had the impression that the candidate was trying to obtain the IRO's assistance merely because his Italian residence permit was expiring, and that the objections to repatriation were "purely personal, as he says he lost all his family in concentration camps and memories would be too painful". At the end of the month, Leone G.'s application was reviewed by a second IRO officer, who declared him fit only for repatriation; after refusing this option, in 1950 he was judged "ineligible".

The cases examined here challenge — at least in part — the idea that, at the end of the war, Jewish DPs "were recognised as an ideal-type community of victims by western humanitarianism" and given full status of political victims, unlike other refugee groups who had "entered the market of international compassion in the 1940s".[108] Seen from this otherwise perfectly acceptable viewpoint, the victorious powers — and the institutions that represented them in the management of the refugee crisis (i.e. the UNRRA and the IRO) — allegedly recognised the supranational nature of Jewish persecution and attributed a collective "survivor" identity to Jewish refugees, who were automatically classified as "United Nations nationals" and entitled to a "preferential treatment".[109] In reality, the Eurocentric perspective of the international refugee regime framed the Jews who left Libya and transited through Italy before emigrating to Israel between 1948 and 1949 neither as victims of anti-Jewish persecution nor as more general victims of the war. However, this lack of recognition has also manifested itself in the oblivion of collective memory and the silence of historiography that have long ignored the experience of the Jews in the colonies of North Africa during the Second World War.

Conclusion

When the Libyan Jews entered the European context, disembarking on Italian soil, they entered a political, social and cultural scene in which the category of "genuine refugee" already existed. Moreover, the figure of the Jewish refugee had already established itself as the "victim par excellence" of a peculiar form of persecution, who had already obtained historical and political recognition within the system that managed the war refugees.[110]

[108] Daniel G. Cohen, *The Politics of Recognition: Jewish Refugees in Relief Policies and Human Rights Debates, 1945-1950*, "Immigrants & Minorities", 2006, vol. 24, n. 2, here p. 125.

[109] D. Cohen, *The Politics of Recognition*, cit., p. 129.

[110] Already in the "Harrison Report", commissioned by the US President Harry S. Truman and published at the end of the summer of 1945, the Jewish survivors of the death camps were

This monolithic representation of the European Jews' war experience was characteristic not only of the institutions that took care of them, but also of the refugees themselves. On the one hand, humanitarian law included in the same category of "Holocaust survivors" those who had suffered persecution and internment as well as the approximately two hundred thousand Polish, Baltic and Russian Jews who had been deported to the vast territories of the Soviet Union during the war, from which they were repatriated at the end of the conflict only to realise that they had become refugees without a homeland, either as a result of the geopolitical changes brought about by the war and peace treaties or because they had to flee post-war anti-Semitism in their country of origin. On the other hand, this collective dimension of the Jewish experience during and after the war was also promoted by representative committees of the Jewish refugees in the German, Austrian and Italian camps themselves. Although Leib Garfunkel — leader of the Organisation of Jewish Refugees in Italy — referred to "the recent pogroms of Tripoli" in his opening speech at the first conference of Jewish refugees in Italy, held in November 1945,[111] the focus on the situation of the Jews in Europe was also prevalent (if not exclusive) among the DPs. The Jewish refugees in the camps of Germany, Austria and Italy attributed to themselves a collective and community identity with a historical responsibility, which they conveyed through the biblical expression *Sherith Ha-Pletah*: "the survived remnant" or "the surviving remnant", "called upon to play a formative role in shaping the Jewish future".[112] The community perspective was also encouraged by the Jewish soldiers and by the *shlichim* who spurred the refugees to focus on their future, instilling a further element of belonging: that to *Eretz Israel*.

Conversely, the episodes of discrimination, internment, deportation and displacement of the Libyan Jews were not instantly elaborated in these terms by the protagonists themselves, nor were they integrated into the social, political and cultural sphere of the DP camps. In fact, the Libyan Jews experienced their stay in the Italian DP camps as a brief transit, to the point that there is no trace — at least in the documents studied so far — of any attempts to set up committees, as the European Jewish DPs had done following the liberation.

Moreover, the contemporary policy of international humanitarianism on refugees also contributed to their exclusion from the category of "survivors".

described in these terms. The Harrison Report can be accessed online at: www.ushmm.org/exhibition/displaced-persons/resourc1.htm.

[111] Opening Speech by L. Garfunkel at the Conference of the Jewish Refugees in Italy, Rome, 26 November 1945, in Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem, L16/521 Sifron Kinus Ha-Pliṭ im Be- Italia Be- ṣiruf ḥovrim Tmunot Proṭookolim Mitkatvim ve-Mavrikim [Programme of the Conference on refugees in Italy, with supplementary brochures, photographs, letters and guest list].

[112] On the origins and development of the use of this expression by Holocaust survivors after the war, see Zeev Mankowitz, *Life Between Memory and Hope. The Survivors of the Holocaust in Occupied Germany*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2002, here p. 3.

Thus, before the 1951 Geneva Convention, the humanitarian organisations that had succeeded one another in the first half of the twentieth century had defined the refugee status and solutions to the refugee crisis by referring to specific ethnic or religious groups and precise historical events. One good example is the UNRRA, whose definition of displaced persons was based on the persecution during the Second World War of a broad range of groups, listed in the above-mentioned manuals that its operators used to determine the candidates' eligibility for international assistance. Subsequently, the IRO introduced a kind of "political turn" in terms of a new awareness of the refugee crisis, namely that it did not finish with the end of the war, but that it also depended on post-1945 territorial and political changes at a global level.[113] This changed situation is, for example, what allowed many European Jewish DPs to justify their refusal to be repatriated and to obtain the IRO's assistance in the DP camps and the resettlement process. Yet, this approach — closely linked to the events of the war in Europe — did not favour the Libyan Jews in the Italian DP during the screening process, as might have happened after the 1951 Geneva Convention, which finally proposed an individual approach and the recognition of the right to flee, or in the 1960s, when the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees extended its mandate to non-European countries.[114] In this case, we could argue that international humanitarianism had not managed or did not yet have the right tools to recognise those "personal catastrophes" of which Holborn spoke in reference to the human problems encountered during the IRO's mission.

Excluded from the often Eurocentric narrative of the Holocaust, from the limiting categorisation policy of post-war international humanitarianism in DP camps, and from the predominance of Ashkenazi Judaism that long characterised the Israeli national and socio-cultural context, the displacement experience of the Jews of Libya has struggled to attract the interest of historians and establish itself as an episode of displacement in history. In fact, historiography has only recently started to discuss the impact of the implementation of racial policies and the consequences of the Second World War on Jewish communities within the colonial context of North Africa, taking into account the "unique triangular situation, where Jews found themselves between the European colonizers and the Muslim colonized".[115] Thus, in the case of the Libyan Jews, the causes behind the displacement are to be found in the Italian racial policies that placed the Jewish minority in a position of inferiority as opposed

[113] For a historical analysis of population movements from a global perspective, see Peter Gatrell, *The Making of the Modern Refugee*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2015.

[114] Recognition of refugee status under the 1951 Geneva Convention remained limited to European citizens for over a decade.

[115] Susan Rubin Suleiman, *Paradigms and Differences*, in A. Boum, S. Abrevaya Stein (eds.), The Holocaust and North Africa, cit., p. 216.

to the Italian settlers and the local Muslims; in the Italian-German alliance and the dynamics of the war in North Africa; and in the British occupation policy, which failed to protect the Libyan Jews from the anti-Jewish violence that resulted from bitter popular discontent and the development of a Libyan national movement. Finally, a decisive factor that determined the trajectory of this migratory flow was the Zionist propaganda of the Jewish soldiers and the *schlichim* who successfully channelled it towards Israel, as also happened with the European Jewish refugees.

Hence, the historical approach enables us to fully understand both the reasons behind the Libyan Jews' displacement and the context in which the reaction of international humanitarianism to their presence in the Italian DP camps developed. Rather than considering the history of the Libyan Jews' displacement as being disconnected from that of the Jewish DPs in Europe or comparing the two experiences, this contribution — responding to Gatrell's invitation — has sought to highlight "connections" that may integrate the histories of both groups.

Foster Parents' Plan. The "invention" of child sponsorship and the launch of its activities in Italy*

Silvia Cassamagnaghi**

Foster Parents' Plan (FPP) was established in 1937 to support child victims of the Spanish Civil War. The initial idea came from an English war correspondent who wanted to create "personal ties" between refugee and orphaned children and their benefactors, thus creating one of the very first "child sponsorship" experiments. The "adoptive parents" financially supported the children and maintained contact with them throughout the letter exchange. With the outbreak of the Second World War, FPP extended its aid to children from other countries as well; by the end of the conflict, it was looking after thousands of young Europeans in situations of poverty and hardship. The organisation did not arrive in Italy until 1947, and its first activities were aimed at children who had been admitted to institutions or who had suffered serious physical impairments due to the war. To successfully deal with the most urgent cases and have a direct connection to Italian society, FPP initially sought the support of institutions already active in the peninsula. However, starting from the early 1950s, it began to operate with greater autonomy thanks also to its proven organisational skills.
Key words: Child sponsorship, Post-World War II era, Voluntary organisations

During the Second World War and in the years immediately following it, various voluntary organisations — both religious and lay, run mainly by Americans — played an important role in alleviating the dramatic conditions in which the citizens of many of the countries affected by the conflict found themselves; they did so by committing themselves to create a system of social assistance that could continue to function in peacetime.[1] While during the war these organisations had operated mostly behind the lines of the Allied front (the UK, in particular), providing emergency humanitarian aid to displaced populations and refugees, their commitment grew exponentially in the subsequent period. Thus, their interventions came to include actions aimed at the

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[1] See Rachel M. McCleary, *Global Compassion. Private Voluntary Organizations and US Foreign Policy Since 1939*, Oxford, New York, Oxford University Press, 2009.

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welfare of civilians in the delicate moment of reconstruction, which was also meant to be a moral and emotional reconstruction.[2]

One of the most topical and important issues of the time — not only for the US government but also for public opinion — was the fate of European children.[3] There was concern about the plight of impoverished children and the measures needed to ensure adequate protection for them; it soon became clear that such a critical and complex situation had to be handled by designated agencies with highly qualified personnel. For example, the United Nations itself sponsored the foundation, in 1946, of the International Children's Emergency Fund (ICEF), which a General Assembly resolution soon transformed into a permanent body, UNICEF, with the contribution of a prestigious group of experts in public health and mother and child care.[4]

Furthermore, various child protection agencies emerged in those years. Although these worked in close collaboration with governmental institutions that gave them some financial support, the funds at their disposal were mainly the merit of the agencies' individual ability to attract a large number of benefactors from whom they collected donations,[5] often trying to connect each child in need to a designated "adoptive parent" in the United States. In the course of these long-distance adoptions, someone overseas promised to financially support one or more children for a fixed period of time. The aim was to estab-

[2] On these issues, see among others: Richard Ashby Wilson, Richard D. Brown (edited by), *Humanitarianism and Suffering. The Mobilitation of Empathy*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009; Johannes Paulmann (edited by), *Dilemmas of Humanitarian Aid in Twentieth Century*, New York-Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2016; Silvia Salvatici, *Nel nome degli altri. Storia dell'umanitarismo internazionale*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2015; Silvia Salvatici, *Senza casa e senza paese. Profughi europei nel secondo dopoguerra*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2008; Ben Shephard, *The Long Road Home. The Aftermath of the Second World War*, London, Vintage Books, 2010; Jessica Reinisch, *Introduction: Relief in the Aftermath of War*, in "Journal of Contemporary History", vol. 43, n. 3, July 2008; Geoff Eley, *Writing the History of the Aftermath: Europe after 1945*, in "History Workshop Journal", vol. 65, n. 1, Spring 2008; Ben Shephard, *"Becoming Planning Minded": Theory and Practice of Relief. 1940-1945*, in "Journal of Contemporary History", vol. 43, n. 3, July 2008; Jessica Reinisch, *Internationalism in Relief: The Birth (and Death) of Unrra*, in "Past and Present", vol. 210, n. 6, 2011; Jessica Reinisch, "*Auntie Unrra" at the Crossroads*, in "Past and Present", vol. 218, n. 8, 2013.

[3] Yves Denéchere, David Niget (sous la direction de), *Droits des enfants au XXe siècle. Pour une histoire transnationale*, Rennes, Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2015; Bruno Maida, *L'infanzia nelle guerre del Novecento*, Turin, Einaudi, 2017; Kriste Lindenmeyer, *A Right to Childhood: the US Children's Bureau and Child Welfare, 1912-1946*, Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 1997; Michal Ostrovsky, *"We Are Standing By": Rescue Operation of the United States Committee for the Care of European Children*, in "Holocaust and Genocide Studies", 29, n. 2 (Fall 2015); Laura Suski, *Children, Suffering and the Humanitarian Appeal*, in Richard Ashby Wilson, Richard D. Brown (edited by), *Humanitarianism and Suffering. The Mobilitation of Empathy*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009.

[4] www.unicef.org/about-us/70-years-for-every-child; see also Townsend Hoopes, Douglas Brinkley, *FDR and the creation of the U.N.*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1997.

[5] R.M. McCleary, *Global Compassion*, cit., pp. 58-63.

lish a bond between "adoptive" parents and "adopted" children, a relationship that was to be nurtured — at least ideally — through the exchange of letters and gifts. Furthermore, it was meant to promote a new understanding between peoples that went beyond official diplomacy, namely by establishing bonds between individuals.[6]

Foster Parents' Plan (hereafter FPP) perfectly fitted the above-mentioned type of institution. After starting its activity in 1937, helping a few hundred child victims of the Spanish Civil War, in the second post-war period it ended up assisting hundreds of thousands of children all over the world. FPP only reached Italy in 1947, two years after the end of the conflict, which was still clearly visible in the country. This initial period was characterised by the need to "gain familiarity" with the new context in which it had to operate, and hence to rely on the recommendations of existing Italian institutions that could direct FPP towards the cases to be followed; within a few years' time, though, there was no longer need to involve the latter as Foster Parents' Plan began to work autonomously.

Unfortunately, very few publications on FPP exist, which furthermore tend to celebrate its activities.[7] Nevertheless, I have managed to reconstruct the history of its origins in Italy, between the end of the 1940s and the early 1950s, drawing on documents from the Italian Red Cross's archive (kept at the Central Archives of the State in Rome) and the Historical archive of the Don Gnocchi Foundation in Milan; these documents have proven useful because the Red Cross Godmothers' Service and the Don Gnocchi Association for Mutilated Children cooperated intensively with the American organisation. I furthermore consulted material preserved in the United Nation Archives in New York, and I conducted a first, partial exploration of the records of the Special Collections and Archives of the University of Rhode Island.

The beginnings: Foster Parents' Plan for Children in Spain and Foster Parents' Plan for War Children

Nowadays known as Plan International, the international children's aid organisation that helped and supported 1.2 million children in 76 different countries around the world in 2018 alone goes a long way back.[8] It originated as Foster Parents' Plan for Children in Spain, with the objective of supporting child victims of the civil war, and it only took on its current name in 1974, when its projects began to focus almost exclusively on South America, Asia and Africa.

[6] Sara Fieldston, *Little Cold Warriors: Child Sponsorship and International Affairs*, in "Diplomatic History", vol. 38, n. 2, 2014, p. 240.

[7] Henry D. Molumphy, *For Common Decency. The History of Foster Parents' Plan. 1937-1983*, Worwick, RI, Foster Parents Plan International, 1984.

[8] See https://plan-international.org/organisation/history (last accessed 14 December 2020).

The British war correspondent John Langdon-Davies gave the first impulse to the foundation of Foster Parents' Plan. During the war in Spain, in the spring of 1937, he developed the idea of creating "personal links" between Spanish children — refugees or orphans — and potential benefactors (then mainly British) to facilitate the sending of aid to the tormented country. Plan aimed to avoid, whenever possible, creating a distance between the children and their relatives; thanks to a system that we could define as one of the first experiments in long-distance adoptions, it sought instead to "strengthen" the situation of the family of origin in such a way that the child would not risk being abandoned or placed in an institution. After all, maintaining a child abroad only cost a few cents a day. Plan aimed to act as a link between children in difficulty and so-called "godparents": from the very beginning, the children were encouraged to develop as personal a relationship as possible with these "foster parents" through the exchange of letters, drawings or photographs.

After gaining the support of Duchess Katherine Marjory Stewart-Murray, an influential member of the British Parliament, an exponent of the Conservative Party and a fervent opponent of Chamberlain's non-interventionist policy,[9] in December 1937 Langdon-Davies went to the United States to raise funds and create the American Committee for Foster Parents' Plan. He was accompanied by his friend Eric Muggeridge, a social worker who had spent two years in Spain setting up shelters for children and helping them evacuate from the most dangerous areas.[10] Langdon-Davies and Muggeridge's efforts went beyond the simple act of solidarity, aspiring to become a more general form of defending childhood. As a 1937 appeal of Plan said, "[c]hildren who have lost all personal ties are encouraged to feel the existence of a personal friend rather than a vague dispenser of charity. This is the essence of the Foster Parent's Scheme".[11]

With the fall of Barcelona in January 1939, over a thousand children were evacuated to France, which also became a destination for numerous exiles from Austria, Germany and Poland when the Second World War broke out in September, and Plan changed its name to Foster Parents' Plan for War Children. However, as the German troops rapidly advanced into France, it became necessary to facilitate the relocation of children to safer places, particularly in the UK; keeping families intact was indeed becoming increasingly difficult. With the help of the London County Council, the British Women's Volunteer Service and the International Commission for War Refugees, many of these children were housed in the suburbs of London, which also became a refuge for children from Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Malta and the Channel

[9] Han Dijsselbloem et al., *Child Sponsorship and Right-Based Interventions at Plan: Tension and Synergies*, in Brad Watson and Matthew Clarke (edited by), *Child Sponsorship: Exploring Pathways to a Brighter Future*, Basingstoke, Hampshire, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, pp. 113-120.

[10] H.D. Molumphy, *For Common Decency*, cit., p. 2.

[11] H. Dijsselbloem et al., *Child Sponsorship and Right-Based Interventions at Plan*, cit., p. 117.

Islands. They were joined by numerous Belgian children after the evacuation of Dunkirk. At the time, Plan's activities in the UK were co-ordinated by Muggeridge, who already in 1940 had proposed to extend the aid to British children who were living with their families but still in need of assistance and care. Thus, nurseries were set up to look after the children of working mothers during the day; the most famous of these "colonies" — set up with the help of Plan — was probably the Hamstead Nurseries, founded by Anna Freud (Sigmund Freud's daughter) and Tiffany Burlingham, an American psychoanalyst specialising in child cases. Refugees with educational, psychological or medical expertise worked in these centres. Building on the experience gained from this fieldwork, Freud and Burlingham produced a series of monthly reports that were published for the first time in 1943, under the title *War and Children* — the first psychological study on the effects of war on children.[12]

Already in 1944, when the destiny of the war was decidedly turning in the Allied armies' favour and a victory over Hitler's Germany did not seem too far away, Plan's staff in the UK and the US — where most of its organisational activities had moved to — predicted that, by the end of the conflict, it would no longer be necessary to provide for refugee children in the UK alone. The real emergency would be that of the children who, in a devastated Europe, more directly and painfully suffered the effects and bore the consequences of the massacre perpetrated in their countries. These children, who had been subjected to abandonment, persecution and the Nazi occupation, were innocent and often unwitting victims: "We have reached a new phase in our work. The end of the war widens our horizons and help can be extended to those countries once under German domination."[13]

There were already thousands of severely impoverished children who had lost everything (starting with their families), who had suffered permanent physical damage and would struggle to find financial help in a continent at the mercy of chaos, whose economy was on its knees. Hence, in the spring of 1944, it was decided that childcare centres should be established in the liberated territories; the first of these was set up in a Catholic school in Malta,[14] thanks to the efforts of Father H.P. Bleach. Similar structures soon followed in Belgium, France, the Netherlands and Italy. In the meantime, Plan's head-

[12] Edna Blue, *Sirens and School Bells*, undated brochure, New York, Foster Parents' Plan, in United Nation Archives, New York, Archive of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (1943-1946), folder on Foster Parent's Plan for War Children. See also Anna Freud and Dorothy T. Burlingham, *War and Children* (edited by Philip R. Lehrman), Westport, Conn., Greenwood Press, 1973; Plan International, *A Journey of Hope. The History of Plan International. 1937-1998*, Surrey (UK), Plan International, 1998.

[13] Edna Blue, *Sirens and School Bells*, undated brochure, New York, Foster Parents' Plan, in United Nation Archives, New York, Archive of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (1943-1946), folder on Foster Parent's Plan for War Children.

[14] H.D. Molumphy, *For Common Decency*, cit., pp. 77-78.

quarters was permanently moved to New York, the city where — also for practical reasons — most of the American charities active at the time had their headquarters: from the port of this city, it was relatively easier and simpler to embark goods (i.e. clothes, food and medical supplies) to be sent to Europe.[15]

By October 1944, Father Bleach had raised enough money to look after a hundred children in Italy. On 4 December, he telegraphed Plan's headquarters in New York to communicate that he had succeeded in opening four colonies in Rome: two in southern Italy for Yugoslav refugee children, and one in Catania. The priest cared for a total of 125 children in Italy and Malta, and he hoped to obtain further funds to assist more.[16]

Foster Parents' Plan for War Children in Italy

The turning point for Foster Parents' Plan in Italy only arrived in May 1947, when the person in charge of European affairs, Fred Mason, went to Rome to appoint a director on site who could follow the situation more directly. It was also a question of finding suitable premises for the organisation's offices and discussing its projects and activities with the local authorities, as well as identifying the first truly needy children to be entrusted to FPP. After several weeks of fruitless negotiations and growing frustration, Mason succeeded in securing a favourable agreement with the Italian government for a good dollar exchange rate and the promise of office space at the National Mother and Child Agency (Opera Nazionale Maternità e Infanzia, hereafter ONMI) in Rome.[17] In that first period, Plan also accepted to support some of the ONMI's activities, sending material "in food and clothing" to be distributed among 450 needy children from the Roman suburbs of Tormarancia, Garbatella and Tor Pignattara who had been selected by the charity:

> The Opera's commissioner, Dr Ignazio Gueli, spoke to the Foster Parents Delegate for Italy, Miss Baccanelli, to convey the beneficiaries' recognition, asking her to transmit the gratitude of the Italian children to the generous American donors. Ms Baccanelli replied to him with kind words, stressing the moral and social value of the American People's initiative in favour of the children of the European Nations that have been most affected by the war.[18]

Mason's choice of director for the new programme in Italy fell on a young Italian American woman, Elma Baccanelli. A Columbia graduate and pupil of Prezzolini, Baccanelli had served on the staff of New York Mayor Fiorello

[15] R.M. McCleary, *Global Compassion*, cit., p. 58.

[16] H.D. Molumphy, *For Common Decency*, cit., p. 78

[17] Michela Minesso (ed.), *Stato e infanzia nell'Italia contemporanea. Origini, sviluppo e fine dell'Onmi. 1925-1975*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2007, p. 131.

[18] *Informazioni e Notizie*, in "Maternità e Infanzia", September-October 1947, p. 49.

La Guardia. During the Second World War, she had been an officer in the US Army Auxiliary Corps, carrying out various missions for the Office of War Information in the United States and Algeria. A few days after Italy was liberated from Nazi-Fascism, she was assigned to Italy where she worked for the US Information Service (hereafter USIS) and subsequently for the American Embassy in Rome.[19] She met Mason when she was assistant to the cultural attaché at the embassy; Mason convinced her to direct Plan from Rome, a job to which she "devoted" herself until the Italian office closed in 1969. She also met her future husband — the journalist Carlo Laurenzi — at the American embassy, and she in fact never returned to live in the United States.[20] From Plan's offices in Via Lucullo, not too far from Via Veneto, Baccanelli managed the organisation's activities for over twenty years, understanding the most urgent needs of the assisted children and knowing how to adapt to them, also depending on the changes that were gradually affecting Italian society.

In the beginning, FPP's actions focused on children hosted by institutions in various parts of Italy, especially those who had suffered physical disabilities during the conflict. It moved on to assist those still living with their families only in a subsequent moment. To deal with the most urgent cases and to have a more direct contact with the Italian situation, in this first period, support was often sought from organisations present in the area, such as the aforementioned ONMI but also the Red Cross Godmothers' Service and the Don Gnocchi Association for Mutilated Children.[21]

Thus, in June 1947, Mason visited the Orphanage of San Michele, a shelter for young mutilated children in the suburbs of Rome, and immediately took charge of it. The following year, Don Orione's Home for mutilated children in Milan became another one of the institutions benefiting from FPP funds thanks to a generous donation from Arturo Toscanini and the hard work of Don Gnocchi, who supervised it. Maestro Toscanini, already an active supporter of the international organisation,[22] was also very close to Don Gnocchi, so

[19] *Meet Plan's Directors. The People Who Help You Help Your Foster Child. Mrs. Elma B. Laurenzi, Director in Italy*, in "Lifelines. 25th Anniversary Year, 1962", Foster Parents' Plan Inc., 1962.

[20] See Laura Laurenzi, *L'americana*, in *Il bicchiere mezzo pieno. I piccoli miracoli quotidiani che cambiano la vita*, Milan, Piemme, 2018, pp. 107-124; Laura Laurenzi, *La madre americana*, Milan, Solferino, 2019, pp. 9-19 and 31-40.

[21] Archivio centrale dello Stato, Fondo Croce Rossa Italiana, Ufficio Madrinato, b. 44-52; Archivio storico Fondazione Don Gnocchi, Milan, Fondo Fondazione Pro Juventute, box 21, folder on Enti stranieri.

[22] Other documents on the relationship between Don Gnocchi and Arturo Toscanini are held at the University of Rhode Island Library Special Collections and Archives, Foster Parents Plan International, Italy: Toscanini, Arturo and Walter, Milan Colony Donation, 1949-1951, box 159, folder 471. Plan's collaboration with Don Gnocchi during the very first years of its activity in Italy is unique as far as relations with Catholic bodies are concerned, except for those with individual institutes, and can almost certainly be traced back to the ties with Arturo Toscanini and

much so that when the Association of Friends of Don Orione's Home for mutilated children (of which Don Gnocchi was president) was founded, on 1 August 1948, Toscanini was appointed honorary president.[23] Thanks to both their and Plan's commitment, a state-of-the-art operating theatre was set up in Milan. In 1949, the Federation for Mutilated Children produced a documentary called *Fiori nella bufera* (Flowers in the storm) about the Home for mutilated children in Milan and, more generally, about the problem of Italian children with permanent wounds inflicted by the war or, in subsequent years, by unexploded war devices.[24] FPP distributed the documentary — dubbed for the foreign market — in the United States under the title *For Us War Goes On*.[25] The aim was to raise awareness of the problem among the American public and to facilitate the participation of potential benefactors in the patronage programme. In 1949, FPP's first executive director, Edna Blue, gave an account of her visit to one of the funded facilities in Italy:

> Today we visited some war blinded [*sic*] children, many of whom were also maimed […]. There is one little boy, totally blind, with both arms missing above the elbows. The child has developed his stumps to almost the same sensitivity as his fingers would have had. And he uses his lips to read braille […]. It seems that during the war many bad amputations were made […]. Some doctors were so rushed they just guillotined the limbs without leaving decent fleshy flaps […] and the child must be operated on again to saw the bone.[26]

In post-war Europe, thousands of children were mutilated, visually impaired or suffering from mental illness. Blue estimated that about thirty-seven per cent of the 12,000 children then cared for by Plan needed artificial limbs, plastic surgery and glass eyes. These numbers did not include children suffering from malnutrition or the 75 per cent of those who had — or were suspected

his family, in particular his daughter Wally and his son Walter, both friends of Don Gnocchi and supporters of FPP.

[23] Edoardo Bressan, *Don Carlo Gnocchi. Una vita al servizio degli ultimi*, Milan, Oltre, 2017, pp. 162-163. On the figure and the work of Don Carlo Gnocchi see also: Giorgio Rumi, Edoardo Bressan, *Don Carlo Gnocchi. Vita e opere di un grande imprenditore della carità*, Milan, Mondadori, 2002; Edoardo Bressan, *Don Carlo Gnocchi. Una vita al servizio degli ultimi*, Milan, Mondadori, 2009; Luisa Bove, *Don Carlo Gnocchi*, Milan, Paoline, 2009.

[24] *Fiori nella bufera*, directed by Ermanno F. Scopinich, 13 min. and 31', 1949. This documentary, which has recently been restored, was commissioned by Don Gnocchi himself to raise awareness among the Italian public opinion of the plight of child amputees and the problem of mines and unexploded bombs; the contribution of Maestro Arturo Toscanini, a friend of Don Gnocchi and supporter of his work, was essential. Archivio storico Fondazione Don Gnocchi, Milan.

[25] *For Us War Goes On*, directed by Ermanno F. Scopinich, 14 min. and 45', 1949. "The film is narrated by Ben Grauer, a US radio and TV personality and also a Plan sponsor. The film focusses on the work of Foster Parents' Plan for War Children in Italy, specifically on children living in a Plan colony who were left disabled during the war". Foster Parents' Plan Italy, https://mediabank.plan-international.org.

[26] H.D. Molumphy, *For Common Decency*, cit., p. 79.

of having — tuberculosis.[27] Italy alone counted 15,000 mutilated children. To provide more efficient support, the Doctors' Committee for Foster Parents Plan for War Children was founded, which gathered plastic and orthopaedic surgeons from various countries around the world. Franco Davide, an Italian child who had lost both legs, was chosen as a "case in point" for the appeal to potential donors in the United States and Canada; photographs of Davide both without and with artificial limbs were used to illustrate an appeal made in February 1949, signed by Blue herself.

> Franco is but one of thousands of children who have been maimed and disfigured by war, orphaned or left in great need. Funds are needed for artificial limbs, plastic surgery, food, clothing and all the things needed in life for a little child.[28]

To keep the solidarity alive and constant, it was necessary to concretely show how Plan used the donations from American godfathers and godmothers. In the same period, another Italian boy — Carmelo Bova, from Palmi in Calabria — reached a rather sad "celebrity" status because of his condition: he had lost both his upper limbs and was in an institution in Rome. He had received wide media coverage at the end of the war, thanks to a drawing dedicated to President Truman that he had made by holding the pencils with his mouth.[29] Plan took an interest in his case and covered all the costs so that Bova could travel to the United States: in July 1948, he was operated on by Dr Henry Kessler, director of the Newark Home for Crippled Children in New Jersey, where he was fitted with state-of-the-art, custom-made artificial limbs.[30] After a necessary period of rehabilitation, Bova returned to the Roman institute that had taken him in before his trip overseas, thanks also to the contribution of his American godparents — his parents would not have been able to take adequate care of him and meet his "special" needs in his native Calabria. However, in November 1949, Don Gnocchi managed to have Bova accepted in his institute in Pessano con Bornago — where there were other amputee children — so that he could resume a "relatively normal" life.[31] Having been selected to receive expert

[27] H.D. Molumphy, *For Common Decency*, cit., pp. 79-80.

[28] *USA appeal, February 1949, Foster Parents' Plan for War Children, Front letter written by Edna Blue, International Chairman*. "This appeal includes an image, and a letter and information about Plan's work. […] This was produced with the aim to encourage people to support the organization and help the children". Foster Parents' Plan Italy, https://mediabank.plan-international.org.

[29] *Drawing by Carmelo Bova, double amputee now with artificial limbs. Carmelo drew this by holding the pen and crayons in his teeth*, 1949-ITA-03.jpg, https://mediabank.plan-international.org.

[30] *Foster child Carmelo Bova takes photo with his newly fitted artificial arms*, 1949-USA-01.jpg, https://mediabank.plan-international.org.

[31] Elma Baccanelli to Don Gnocchi, 10 November 1949 and Don Gnocchi to Elma Baccanelli, 14 November 1949, in Archivio storico Fondazione Don Gnocchi, Milan, Fondo Fondazione Pro Juventute, box 21, folder on Enti stranieri.

medical assistance in the United States, a year and a half earlier, the young man had subsequently led a "life of representation", filled with photoshoots, interviews and appearances at various charity events. Replying to a letter from the director of Plan Italy, who asked that Bova be allowed to travel to Rome to meet Edna Blue during her visit to the capital, Don Gnocchi begged Elma Baccanelli to spare the young man this trip. He requested that such opportunities for visibility be limited in that they were detrimental to his education: they "had gone to his head" and made him believe that his fame could last forever.[32]

> Bova is now on the eve of independent life […]. He should at least attend the five years of primary school, but at 15 he is in his second year, risking not to pass even this one. […] But this is also a result of the distracted life that he has had to lead until now. […] He is already a difficult boy; the system has made him worse and only now, in the hands of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, is he getting back in touch with reality, which is very hard for him.[33]

In the same letter, Don Gnocchi also said that Italy was by then capable of producing artificial limbs: "Currently [Bova] is entirely armless. The American ones are… miniature because of his greatly increased stature. Those being constructed in Parma, in our workshop, are still sketched out."[34]

Without a doubt, the FPP funds were put to good use. In recognition of its efforts to rehabilitate mutilated children, in 1950 the organisation received two important awards: the first-class Order of Merit from the Sovereign Military Order of Malta, and the Order of the Star of Italian Solidarity. Plan continued to assist amputee children in collaboration with Don Gnocchi until 1952, the year in which Law 648 of 1950 became fully effective.[35] Paralysed, mutilated and blind children now began to receive a regular disability pension from the Italian government and Plan's intervention in this area was suspended, as were other "external" collaborations.

However, the American organisation had greatly expanded its activities during that same period, especially in the most disadvantaged areas of the peninsula. Poverty was most dramatic in the South, and Fred Mason had travelled through much of Southern Italy in an attempt to understand where the organisation's interest might lie.

> The mere fact that Plan help, extensive as it is, can take care of only a tiny fraction of so much really sickening misery, makes it imperative that we assist only the worst cases, which

[32] Don Gnocchi to Elma Baccanelli, 4 March 1950, in Archivio storico Fondazione Don Gnocchi, Milan, Fondo Fondazione Pro Juventute, box 21, folder on Enti stranieri.

[33] Don Gnocchi to Elma Baccanelli, 4 March 1950, in Archivio storico Fondazione Don Gnocchi, Milan, Fondo Fondazione Pro Juventute, box 21, folder on Enti stranieri.

[34] Don Gnocchi to Elma Baccanelli, 4 March 1950, in Archivio storico Fondazione Don Gnocchi, Milan, Fondo Fondazione Pro Juventute, box 21, folder on Enti stranieri.

[35] Law 648 of 10 August 1950, "Reorganisation of the provisions on military pensions", published in the Official Gazette on 1 September 1950, Suppl. Ord. n. 200.

means that we have to be selective to a degree that would seem positively inhuman, to an untrained observer. In spite of my supposed conditioning to his sort of thing, my trip into southern Italy bought back all too actively, the old familiar gnawing heartaches which leave me miserable and depressed at the end of a long day, during which I have had to bid adieu to so many people who are so obviously in every conceivable kind of want, […] the doubly unfortunate children for whom, utterly destitute relatives are striving, scheming and stealing — yes — stealing, some of them — to keep the children alive, and when I say "keep them alive", I mean just that and no more.[36]

According to Mason, the expression "poor beyond belief" best described the situation.[37] In Naples, he met a woman who had lost her husband, her home and all her possessions during an air raid. She had nowhere to go: there were no relatives to take her in, and the few habitable houses that remained standing were overcrowded. A cave on the edge of the city offered the only possible refuge for her and her children: the latter were dressed in rags, whereas old pieces of cardboard stopped the rain and wind from entering the cave, also providing a minimum of privacy for the family. Often the only meal the woman managed to prepare was a soup made by boiling dandelion and other herbs. Stones sprouted from the cave's uneven floor, whereas the family's furniture — a bed and a table — was made from old pieces of packaging. Not least, the cave had to be shared with 64 other families.[38]

Mason also reported on another case that had particularly struck him, regarding one of the many sick children. This story illustrated the dramatic situation of poverty in Italy, where less than four dollars could make the difference between life and death — four dollars were, in fact, the necessary amount of money to buy the medicines that could help a child survive in the province of Foggia. However, the easily available doses of streptomycin and penicillin cost 2,400 lire: not even a petition among the villagers could raise that kind of money. Mason did not hesitate to buy the necessary drugs and give them to the family himself, but he knew that Plan could not follow this case since the child was not a victim of the war and still had both parents, who could — at least formally — have provided for him.

This was exactly the issue; apart from the exceptional measures taken by the European director during his visit to Italy, the detailed work that Elma Baccanelli carried out every single day should have been the real heart of the programme. The Roman headquarters of FPP was located a stone's throw from the American embassy, in the Via Veneto area — then the epicentre of a "reckless" worldliness compared to what were generally times of hardship. Plan occupied a flat with half a dozen adjoining rooms where the doors always had

[36] H.D. Molumphy, *For Common Decency*, cit., p. 81.

[37] University of Rhode Island, Library Special Collections and Archives, Foster Parents Plan International, Italy: Fred W. Mason, Field Report, New Areas in Italy, 9th April 1951, box 158, folder 461.

[38] H.D. Molumphy, *For Common Decency*, cit., p. 81.

to be wide open, as the director had established.[39] This way, the staff — about ten employees in all — could always be in close contact. However, Baccanelli's work was not and could not be mere office work: at least once every fortnight, an inspection in the field was necessary. Thus, she would leave Rome to reach the outermost areas of the peninsula, those most in need of help, travelling in any weather condition and along roads that were still bumpy and often dangerous, in a car — "more of a van than a sedan" — fully loaded with parcels, boxes, sacks, consumer goods, blankets, shoes, medicines and sweets, and anything that was considered useful for the children they were going to meet and assist, or even just encourage.[40]

Who the first children helped by Plan in Italy exactly were can be deducted from the forms that had to be filled out by those organisations that proposed candidates to be godmothers, which were mainly childcare institutions.[41] The assisted children had to be war orphans, even only with a single parent if the latter was unable to look after them, the children of severely disabled or war-disabled people, or they had to have personally suffered physical damage as a result of the conflict. Despite Mason's conviction that the South was the place where assistance was needed most, in the early years requests also frequently arrived from the North (including from the "rich" Emilia Romagna region) or from central Italy.[42]

The forms contained no less than 39 points, all of which had to be completed in full, and which ranged from the simple details of the child — name (but also nickname), gender, age, date and place of birth, religion, school and class attendance, future aspirations — to those concerning the parents and any siblings.[43] Particular attention was to be paid to point 36, "General information about the child", the answer to which should clearly explain the child's family situation: death or illness of the father or other relatives due to the conflict, the child's current economic conditions, and whether it had any prob-

[39] I have taken most of the information about Elma Baccanelli from the recollections of her daughter, Laura Laurenzi, contained in the short story *L'americana*, cit., pp. 107-124, and in the book *La madre americana*, cit.

[40] L. Laurenzi, *L'americana*, cit., p. 120.

[41] Norme per la compilazione dei moduli del Foster Parents' Plan for War Children, no date, in Archivio centrale dello Stato, Fondo Croce Rossa Italiana, Servizio madrinato, Foster Parents' Plan, Comitato Centrale, Ufficio madrinato, folder 44.

[42] The institutions that asked for Plan's patronage through the Red Cross were located in Modena and throughout its province, in Misano Adriatico, Pesaro, Massa Marittima and Rome, in its poorest neighbourhoods and in the province. See Archivio centrale dello Stato, Fondo Croce Rossa Italiana, Servizio madrinato, Foster Parents' Plan, Comitato Centrale, Ufficio madrinato, folders 44, 45, 46.

[43] See Questionario d'ammissione al Foster Parents' Plan, no date, in Archivio storico Fondazione Don Gnocchi, Milan, Fondo Fondazione Pro Juventute, box 21, folder on Enti stranieri.

lems, including relational, health or moral problems.[44] The forms had to be accompanied by a full-length photograph (in four copies, on film) of the child dressed "like every day",[45] and "with flowers or other decorative elements" in the background — perhaps to give at least a semblance of normality to the everyday life of these children, even if they often wore the uniform of the institution where they were hospitalised.[46] In addition, Plan requested that the sole of the child's right foot (drawn on tissue paper) be sent along, probably to facilitate the potential gift or purchase of a pair of shoes.[47]

Almost all the children were smiling in the photographs: they all look like lively little girls and rascals on whose faces it is difficult to read the pain and misery that the attached profiles recounted. Their stories, if read one after another, all seem tragically similar, almost indistinguishable and even "banal" for a country coming out of the war, as the following three examples demonstrate: fathers killed during the conflict, in battle or by Allied bombing, gone missing in Russia or rounded up by the Germans; sick mothers with humble and miserable jobs, or no job at all; numerous siblings, a destroyed house, scarce food, a precarious life and the children left all to themselves.

- The father was shot dead by the Germans on 18/3/44, in retaliation. The mother, in poor health, has to support three other children. Poor economic conditions. N. is good, obliging and zealous; from 10/6/46 she is admitted to the Sacra Famiglia Orphanage in San Damaso (Modena).[48]
- The father is missing in Montenegro. The mother, a laundress, has to take care of two other children, both suffering from primary TB. Until last June, the National Liberation Committee of San Damaso acted as Godfather, but this was dissolved on 1 July and the child is therefore without a Godfather. He has been hospitalised at the Suffrage Institute of Magreta.[49]

[44] Elma Baccanelli to Mariuccia Meda, Pro Infanzia mutilata, 10 February 1948, in Archivio storico Fondazione Don Gnocchi, Milan, Fondo Fondazione Pro Juventute, box 21, folder on Enti stranieri.

[45] Elma Baccanelli to Mariuccia Meda, Pro Infanzia mutilata, 10 February 1948, in Archivio storico Fondazione Don Gnocchi, Milan, Fondo Fondazione Pro Juventute, box 21, folder on Enti stranieri.

[46] Norme per la compilazione dei moduli del Foster Parents' Plan for War Children, no date, Archivio centrale dello Stato, Fondo Croce Rossa Italiana, Servizio madrinato, Foster Parents' Plan, Comitato Centrale, Ufficio madrinato, folder 44.

[47] The characteristics of the photographs and footprint drawings that had to be attached clearly emerge from the documents held in folders 44, 45 and 46, in Archivio centrale dello Stato, Fondo Croce Rossa Italiana, Servizio madrinato, Foster Parents' Plan, Comitato Centrale, Ufficio madrinato.

[48] N.A., 1938, no date, Elenco nominativo di orfani già ricoverati in Istituti — Modena, in Archivio centrale dello Stato, Fondo Croce Rossa Italiana, Servizio madrinato, Foster Parents' Plan, Comitato Centrale, Ufficio madrinato, folder 44.

[49] I.V., 1939, no date, Elenco nominativo di orfani già ricoverati in Istituti — Modena, Archivio centrale dello Stato, Fondo Croce Rossa Italiana, Servizio madrinato, Foster Parents' Plan, Comitato Centrale, Ufficio madrinato, folder 44.

– She lived with her old and sick grandparents. Her mother died in the bombings. Her father died in Russia in 1944. The girl, along with her brother, were taken in by their grandparents, but it can be said that they were left to live on the streets.[50]

Some of these stories were also closely linked to the most tragic events of the war years, such as the "Moroccans' deeds" or the Fosse Ardeatine massacre.

– Her mother has been persecuted by two Maroquins and was killed in front of the child, who has had a serious nervous shock and never quite recovered; learning at school is very difficult for her. Otherwise quite normal. Her father is without a work, has remarried and takes some interest in the child.[51]
– His father was a captain in the army and was killed by the Germans in the massacre of the Fosse Ardeatine (Rome) with other 320 Italians on the 24 March 1944. His family didn't need help before the father's death but now they are in very bad economic conditions.[52]

The efficiency of a tried-and-tested system

The long-distance adoption system used by FPP was by no means paternalistic, bureaucratic and complex; on the contrary, it tended to be functional and pragmatic. It was conceived as a form of personal assistance and should always have maintained this character. It was never FPP as an institution that gave charity to a certain institution, but an individual American citizen — or a group of students, friends or colleagues — who helped a child through this organisation. Plan defined itself — and tried to be — a purely secular body and preferred to operate on its own, mostly to be able to maintain its non-denominational identity. Its top management, in fact, knew well how complicated the Italian situation was, from a political and religious point of view:

A further complication in Italy […] is the fact that the country is riddled with Political Religious and "Politico-Religio" (my own word) parties and factions.
It was said to me "Yes, but if you put a Jew in charges [*sic*] of your organisation in Italy, everyone will think that it is an ANTI-CATHOLIC Plan." On the other hand, if you give money and food to Roman Catholics for poor children, they will give it all to the Catholic children and will see a Protestant or a Jewish child starve. In this country, no one does anything for nothing, no one is disinterested or impartial, and no one would ever believe that the Foster Parents' Plan had not got some political axe to grind, or some string to pull.[53]

[50] Record on M.C, 1935 — Istituto Maria Pia Mecheri, Velletri, 29 July 1947, in Archivio centrale dello Stato, Fondo Croce Rossa Italiana, Servizio madrinato, Foster Parents' Plan, Comitato Centrale, Ufficio madrinato, folder 44.

[51] Record on O.R., 1940, Colonia della Garbatella, no date, in Archivio centrale dello Stato, Fondo Croce Rossa Italiana, Servizio madrinato, Foster Parents' Plan, Comitato Centrale, Ufficio madrinato, folder 45.

[52] Record on B.F., 1936, no date, Archivio centrale dello Stato, Fondo Croce Rossa Italiana, Servizio madrinato, Foster Parents' Plan, Comitato Centrale, Ufficio madrinato, folder 44.

[53] University of Rhode Island, Library Special Collections and Archives, Foster Parents Plan International, Italy: Letter from Fred Mason to Edna Blue, Rome 24th May 1947, box 157, folder 451.

Likewise, the interpersonal relations with a "certain priest and nuns" who managed various institutes for minors had initially been complicated, to say the least, and it had generated a certain distrust among Plan's emissaries.[54] The latter concluded that the only reliable offices in Italy were those of the American embassy and, therefore, ensured that the management of the various cases remained as internal as possible.

Whenever a child was proposed, the FPP director in Italy was called to investigate the case and forward the file to the New York office. As soon as the child was "godfathered", the American office informed the Rome office and the director contacted the head of the relevant institution.[55]

Aspiring Foster Parents in the United States received a brochure that explained in detail how to proceed with the "Application to Become a Foster Parent to a War Child".[56] It was instantly clear, starting from the cover, that the programme would protect both parties (i.e. "parents" and children). Each Foster Parent had to guarantee their help for a minimum period of one year and agree to maintain a personal relationship with the child in their care; the latter, in turn, would immediately have known who was helping them from overseas through a letter exchange that would be managed by Plan's offices. For this purpose, both benefactors and beneficiaries were assigned a number (Parent's Number and Child's Number respectively) that would have to appear on cheques and letters: "This insures your payment being credited to the correct account. Failure to include your number causes expense and delay in acknowledgement of your payment."[57] All letters addressed to Foster Children invariably had to be forwarded to Plan's office in New York, and the name and personal number had to be indicated at the top right of the letter, together with the child's identification number and its country of residence. There was no need for additional postage: one time a week, the letters were sent all at once, by express airmail, without further charge to the parents.[58] All letters were

[54] University of Rhode Island, Library Special Collections and Archives, Foster Parents Plan International, Italy: Letter from Fred Mason to Edna Blue, Rome 9th March 1948, box 157, folder 452.

[55] Elma Baccanelli, Metodo da seguire dai direttori di Istituti che hanno proposto bambini, vittime di guerra al Madrinato americano Foster Parents' Plan for War Children Inc. e che hanno avuto un numero di bambini accettati, cyclostyled sheet, no date (c. 1948), in Archivio centrale dello Stato, Fondo Croce rossa italiana, Servizio madrinato, Foster Parents' Plan, Comitato Centrale, Ufficio madrinato, folder 44.

[56] Application to Become a Foster Parent to a War Child, undated brochure, New York, Foster Parents' Plan, in United Nation Archives, New York, Archive of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (1943-1946), folder on Foster Parent's Plan for War Children.

[57] Information for Foster Parents, undated brochure, in Social Welfare History Archives, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, International Social Service United States of America Branch records, box 11, folder 11.09.

[58] Information for Foster Parents, undated brochure, in Social Welfare History Archives, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, International Social Service United States of America Branch records, box 11, folder 11.09.

translated at Plan's office in the country where the Foster Child lived; parents and children received both the original letter and the translation. As a precautionary measure for the safety of the American donors, it was expressly recommended that the godparents' address should not be revealed, either through the stationery or in the letter itself. In fact, Plan strongly discouraged any direct communication between parents and adoptive children, for a very simple reason: in countries suffering conditions of extreme poverty and great need, such as post-war Italy, "the name and address of a generous benefactor is much sought after".[59] Direct inquiries from the beneficiaries or their relatives would only have created confusion, discomfort and embarrassment.

The Foster Parents could otherwise write about anything they wanted to their adopted child: where they came from (without, of course, mentioning the exact address), their home, their friends, the school they had attended or were attending, their pets, the little things they did every day. The children who received these letters generally treasured them and the accompanying photographs. Not surprisingly, the name and Foster Parent's number also had to be indicated on the back of each photograph to prevent the latter from getting lost if it was accidentally separated from the letter.

On several occasions, Elma Baccanelli herself dealt with the Italian children, sending highly detailed letters to every institute that asked for Plan's patronage. To facilitate everyone's work, the directors of the various reception structures were asked to follow the instructions closely.[60] Every month, the children who had been sponsored had to write a letter to their American godfather or godmother, exclusively on the special 20×16 cm writing paper distributed by Plan's office. The letters had to begin with the Foster Parent's name (for example, "Dear Mrs Smith" or "Dear Mr Bell"), and they always had to be personal, paying less attention to the form than to the content: the recipients were keen to learn something about the life of the child they were helping, about its aspirations, what it was doing every day.[61] Here, too, the institute's or the child's address was never to be specified, only the relevant reference numbers. There was a kind of box at the top left of the stationery that

[59] Information for Foster Parents, undated brochure, in Social Welfare History Archives, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, International Social Service United States of America Branch records, box 11, folder 11.09.

[60] See, for example, Elma Baccanelli, Metodo da seguire dai direttori di Istituti che hanno proposto bambini, vittime di guerra al Madrinato americano Foster Parents' Plan for War Children Inc. e che hanno avuto un numero di bambini accettati, cyclostyled sheet, no date (c. 1948), in Archivio centrale dello Stato, Fondo Croce Rossa Italiana, Servizio madrinato, Foster Parents' Plan, Comitato Centrale, Ufficio madrinato, folder 44.

[61] Elma Baccanelli, Metodo da seguire dai direttori di Istituti che hanno proposto bambini, vittime di guerra al Madrinato americano, Foster Parents' Plan for War Children Inc. e che hanno avuto un numero di bambini accettati, cyclostyled sheet, no date (c. 1948), in Archivio centrale dello Stato, Fondo Croce Rossa Italiana, Servizio madrinato, Foster Parents' Plan, Comitato Centrale, Ufficio madrinato, folder 44.

had to be filled out by the directors or managers of the centres where the children were lodging. In this space, in block letters and pencil, the godparent's number had to be indicated under the letter "F.", whereas the child's number and name had to be written — again in pencil — next to the words "Foster Child". Above all, it was recommended that the letters be sent to Plan's Roman office on a regular basis so that they would arrive by the tenth of each month. Any requests to send along photographs were often difficult to comply with as taking a snapshot was a real luxury at the time. Occasionally Baccanelli herself, or one of her collaborators, would photograph the children and, of course, translate their letters into English; vice versa, they would translate those written by the American "parents" into Italian.[62] If, for health or any other reason, the child was unable to write by itself, it was suggested that a companion write the letter; in the most extreme cases, the director of the foster home had to write a few lines to the adoptive parents, explaining the reasons for the impediment. Baccanelli added a "small threat" to these indications, mostly to make them more effective: monthly payments would only be made for children who had fulfilled their duty.[63]

Everything was well codified, even bordering on the obvious, with the precise intention of maintaining a certain order. Thus, the children were asked to answer their godparents' letters to the point: "This prevents the children from writing their letters in advance. This practice is not allowed and may result in the child being removed from the lists."[64]

The "American parents" often also sent gift packages to their godchildren, and the child would be required to write a thank-you note, referring to the contents of the box: they would have to confirm if the gifts were of the right size and if they had appreciated them. This additional letter was in no way meant to replace the monthly one and would be forwarded immediately to Plan's office, without waiting until all the letters from that institution would be sent together.

If the adopted children wanted to make drawings, their creative flair had to be executed on special paper; a box identical to the one on the stationery was printed on the back of the paper, and it had to be filled out in the same

[62] L. Laurenzi, *L'americana*, cit., p. 121.

[63] Elma Baccanelli, Metodo da seguire dai direttori di Istituti che hanno proposto bambini, vittime di guerra al Madrinato americano, Foster Parents' Plan for War Children Inc. e che hanno avuto un numero di bambini accettati, cyclostyled sheet, no date (c. 1948), in Archivio centrale dello Stato, Fondo Croce Rossa Italiana, Servizio madrinato, Foster Parents' Plan, Comitato Centrale, Ufficio madrinato, folder 44.

[64] Elma Baccanelli, Metodo da seguire dai direttori di Istituti che hanno proposto bambini, vittime di guerra al Madrinato americano, Foster Parents' Plan for War Children Inc. e che hanno avuto un numero di bambini accettati, cyclostyled sheet, no date (c. 1948), in Archivio centrale dello Stato, Fondo Croce Rossa Italiana, Servizio madrinato, Foster Parents' Plan, Comitato Centrale, Ufficio madrinato, folder 44.

way. The drawings would then be sent to the United States as "attachments". Furthermore, since many of the facilities where the children were placed provided manual activities strictly differentiated according to gender, as was then the norm, it was considered good practice to encourage a child if it expressed the desire to make something special. Thus, the carpentry workshops attended by boys might produce simple wooden objects, while the girls would embroider a handkerchief during domestic education hours. These items had to be "individual", that is, designed as a gift from a particular child to its godfather, hence not part of some collective project that could diminish the value of the gesture.[65]

Baccanelli was also a meticulous administrator: every entry and exit was necessarily documented. For each fiscal year, she reported the number of assisted children, the miles she and her staff travelled to reach the children and the expenditure of the invested funds, item by item. Each expense was reported to the penny, whether it was medical care (especially vaccines and vitamins), textbooks, shoes or clothes, but also bicycles.[66]

Generally, children under 12 were assisted as Foster Children and remained in the programme until they reached the age of 16. The only exceptions were made for children who applied to high school, for whom contributions were made until the end of their studies.[67]

Some "results" of Foster Parents' Plan in Italy

From the early 1950s onwards, many things changed in the management of Plan in Italy; as the staff at the Rome office became more familiar with the situation in the country and gained a clearer understanding of the children's real needs, which could vary from one part of the peninsula to another, their management of the activities also changed significantly. Thus, the priority was no longer to assist amputee children, even if these had been the organisation's first concern when it established itself in Italy, as stated in the first issue of *Lifelines*, a publication celebrating Plan's twenty-fifth year of activity:

> There were over 10,000 mutilated children in Italy when Plan launched its healing work there. In areas where no other relief agency was operating, Plan went to aid the suffering youngsters… in Monteflavio, Carchitti, Poli [in the province of Rome]… to the very tip of

[65] Elma Baccanelli, Metodo da seguire dai direttori di Istituti che hanno proposto bambini, vittime di guerra al Madrinato americano, Foster Parents' Plan for War Children Inc. e che hanno avuto un numero di bambini accettati, foglio ciclostilato, no date (c. 1948), in Archivio centrale dello Stato, Fondo Croce Rossa Italiana, Servizio madrinato, Foster Parents' Plan, Comitato Centrale, Ufficio madrinato, folder 44.

[66] L. Laurenzi, L'americana, cit., pp. 121-122.

[67] H.D. Molumphy, *For Common Decency*, cit., p. 2.

Sicily… where blind children with little stumps for hands where rescued from the misery in which they lived. There was Italo, a pint-sized boy with a giant will. He had neither hands nor eyes, but learned to read Braille with his lips… The great Arturo Toscanini provided funds for a special operating room in Plan's Milan Colony for Mutilated Children. The Maestro was a contributor and sponsor until his death.[68]

The cases Plan dealt with were increasingly chosen directly by the American organisation and, as time went by, an attempt was made to increase the number of children living with their families of origin, rather than those in institutions. What never changed, though, was the practice of exchanging letters and sending gifts, which remained a constant: "From children in Italy to Foster Parents in America came letters of gratitude […] for food and clothes, for a roof and bed,"[69] and "[t]he soccer ball […] gives the poorest boy a sense of pride. Here a Foster Child plays with a ball sent by his Foster Parent."[70]

An analysis of *Lifelines*, of which at least two issues were published in 1962,[71] enables a reconstruction of the outcome of some of Plan's sponsorship stories in Italy: "Where are they now, yesterday's hungry children, the little victims of war and want who were rescued, healed, fed, protected by strangers' loving hands?"[72] Indeed, it is currently not yet possible to consult — directly and extensively — the documents produced by Plan during its years of activity in Italy, which I have here only partially used, and hence to gain a more critical and complex picture of the situation. We therefore have no choice but to rely on these pamphlets, which may of course lead to a partial and "partisan" vision.[73] Nevertheless, such a reading can be an interesting operation, obviously keeping in mind the peculiar, sometimes paternalistic language ("strangers' loving hands") used by the editors of the time and the fact that the chosen cases all represented — and necessarily so, given the eulogistic intentions — successful examples of Plan's programme.

Plan stopped making contributions to a Foster Child once it was able to provide for itself; in other words, when it finished its second cycle of studies, which could then already be around the age of 14, or found a job, which could

[68] *Plan is there today. In Italy, in 1947...*, in "Lifelines. 25th Anniversary Year, 1962", Foster Parents' Plan Inc., 1962.

[69] *Plan is there today. In Italy, in 1947...*, in "Lifelines. 25th Anniversary Year, 1962", Foster Parents' Plan Inc., 1962.

[70] *Plan is there today. In Italy, in 1947...*, picture caption, in "Lifelines. 25th Anniversary Year, 1962", Foster Parents' Plan Inc., 1962.

[71] I consulted "Lifelines. 25th Anniversary Year, 1962" and "Lifelines No. 2. 25th Anniversary Year, 1962" at the SWHA of Minneapolis: box 11, folder 11.09 and box 21, folder on Foster Parents' Plan, respectively.

[72] *Yesterday's Children*, in "Lifelines. 25th Anniversary Year, 1962", Foster Parents' Plan Inc., 1962.

[73] Although the documents of the Foster Parents' Plan held at the University of Rhode Island, Library Special Collections and Archives, cover the entire chronological span of its presence in Italy, currently it is only possible to view those from the earliest years.

happen even earlier. This did not prevent the fact that, if a good relationship had been established with the Foster Parent, this relationship would continue even after the benefactor's financial aid had been transferred to a more impoverished or younger child. It could also happen that a Foster Child became so attached to director who visited it, or to the social worker who followed its case, that it stayed in contact even with them.[74] For the luckiest of the formerly sponsored children, the interest — albeit from a distance — of an American parent had meant hope after the war and the possibility of creating a new life for themselves; the Italian children were certainly and apparently grateful for this, and would continue to be so.

Anna, for example, was a young woman who had managed to fulfil her childhood dream of becoming a teacher thanks to her "adoptive father in America". During the day, she taught primary school children, who often had to help their parents in the fields after school; in the evenings, she taught illiterate adults, who struggled with tiredness and sleep after a long day's work.

> My great joy came at the end of the school year when all my children were promoted, and I saw on the faces of the adults the satisfaction which comes after winning a hard battle and they knew how to write and read.[75]

Domenica used to think she was living a fairy tale whenever she received a gift from America as a child; when she grew up, she graduated as a company secretary. Cesare, on the other hand, had been a frail, weak and sickly child, but he eventually became a sailor serving in the Italian navy.[76] Linotypist Bruno was orphaned at the age of 10, ending up in an institution with his brother:

> Plan changed our lives. There was money each month, and the magnificent parcels of clothing, food and other useful items. I received lovely letters from my Foster Parents and their immense affection made me feel less alone. […] When I left [the orphanage], I had a diploma as a typesetter.[77]

Finally, Carlo was a poor and malnourished 13-year-old boy when Foster Parents' Plan took up his case right after the end of the war. Once he left the programme, he joined the Air Force but soon realised that he was not suited for a military career; after much soul-searching, he decided to enter the seminary. In all those years, he had stayed in touch with Baccanelli. This is how Brother Carlo — now in his thirties — described his experience in a letter to her:

[74] *Yesterday's Children*, in "Lifelines. 25th Anniversary Year, 1962", Foster Parents' Plan Inc., 1962.

[75] *Anna Bielo, a Country School Teacher*, "Lifelines. 25th Anniversary Year, 1962".

[76] *Domenica Elena Peluso, an Expert Secretary* e *Seaman Cesare Del Grosso*, "Lifelines. 25th Anniversary Year, 1962".

[77] *Linotypist Bruno Battisti*, "Lifelines. 25th Anniversary Year, 1962".

I was 13 when I best remember Plan. Just after the war, at the end of [the] school year, I was asked to put on my best clothes to be photographed. I did not understand the significance this would have for me. […] I had only what Plan gave me: in money, clothing, food. They even gave me toys and candy. When a package came, I was rich. I have never lost contact with Plan, [I] have even been a collaborator of its work, pointing out several pitiful cases. Through Plan I was able to feel the truth of the saying: "It is better to give than to receive." Above all, I saw the need in the world for fraternal charity. The Plan gifts were sent by the Divine Father, as they came across the sea, from people I did not know.[78]

All these testimonies underlined how Plan had helped Italian children and, despite their initial situation of poverty and hardship, enabled them to provide for themselves as well as to become productive members of society and active citizens.

One important point emerges from Brother Carlo's words, even if indirectly: the help had come from "across the ocean", from the United States. A similar message was quite important in the Cold War era if we bear in mind that, albeit briefly, Elma Baccanelli — the "first and only" director of Plan in Italy — had also worked for the USIS. This acronym indicated all the offices of the various agencies that, under the aegis of the State Department, dealt with political and cultural information from 1945 onwards.[79] The American system of communication and dissemination of propaganda, from the Second World War on and at least throughout the 1950s, was very advanced, and one of its main concerns was to convey a good self-image abroad. Other than the most obvious means of disseminating information, such as the press, radio or cinema, "interpersonal sources" like friends, relatives and acquaintances were still very important for a country like Italy,[80] especially if they had obtained a certain social success through education — something that could essentially be achieved through Plan's programme.

A young doctor, a future engineer and a radio operator: all had gone from being poor orphans with an uncertain future ahead to becoming professionals, thanks to their individual skills and abilities. They had achieved a secure position in life, but without ever forgetting to whom they owed their fortune.

[78] *A Boy Called Carlo*, "Lifelines. 25th Anniversary Year, 1962".

[79] In August 1953, President Eisenhower set up an independent agency, the United State Information Agency (USIA), which was to incorporate all information programmes; however, the USIS continued to refer to the various USIA offices located abroad. The Information Service had arrived in Italy with the Allied troops before the end of hostilities, as a department within the Office of War Information (OWI), which dealt specifically with propaganda and with the Psychological Warfare Branch (PWB), the Allied body in charge of conducting psychological warfare, but it only began to operate autonomously after the Liberation. See Simona Tobia, *Advertising America. The United States Information Service in Italy (1945-1956)*, Milan, LED, 2008.

[80] See Silvia Cassamagnaghi, *Immagini dall'America. Mass media e modelli femminili nell'Italia del secondo dopoguerra. 1945-1960*, Milan, FrancoAngeli, 2007, pp. 21-44.

It made me see that there are good people who want to help us feel we are not alone, and who can give with all their souls.[81]
My Foster Parent taught me the goodness of people.[82]
While there is still so much discord in the world, Foster Parents' Plan endeavours to unite the different peoples of the world into one great family.[83]

Conclusion

From 1947 until 1969, Foster Parents' Plan supported 11,385 minors in Italy alone,[84] giving them opportunities that seemed almost unimaginable in the post-war years. While it is true that, from the first days of its activity in Spain and throughout the following years, Plan overtly maintained a completely neutral, impartial attitude, helping children in every part of the world without considering the religious faith or political affiliation of their parents,[85] the children benefiting from the programme inevitably became ideal examples of the goodness of the United States' social, administrative and international practices, at a time when it was essential for the Americans to demonstrate — even to the Allies — that their model was superior to the Soviet one.[86] Nonetheless, many American citizens were "run over" by the task of protecting the "free world",[87] thanks to an unprecedented extension of the concept of "family"; supporting the projects of organisations helping children abroad meant that the Americans' daily lives came to include relationships that — at least in terms of belonging — went beyond the ties linked to their nation or family. Finally, it was not at all necessary for the adults and children involved in these long-distance adoptions to be fully aware of the political role they were playing or might play in the future: while they were probably far from sophisticated diplomatic actors, they were more or less involved in the battle against communism.

Unfortunately, the period taken into consideration here was necessarily, and inevitably, short.[88] Consequently, it was not possible to fully analyse the over

[81] *One of Tomorrow's Medics. He'll be a MD in 1962. Alberto Lungaro*, in "Lifelines No. 2, 25th Anniversary Year, 1962".

[82] *A Future Engineer. Ennio Ritossa*, in "Lifelines No. 2, 25th Anniversary Year, 1962".

[83] *I'm Not an Important Person. Franco Stincheddu*, in "Lifelines No. 2, 25th Anniversary Year, 1962".

[84] Laura Asnaghi, *Il gran ritorno dei pionieri dell'adozione a distanza C'è ancora bisogno di noi*, in "la Repubblica", Milan, 9 November 2012.

[85] S. Fieldston, *Little Cold Warriors*, cit., pp. 241 and 244-245.

[86] See Margaret Peacock, *Innocent Weapons. The Soviet and American Politics of Childhood in the Cold War*, Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2014.

[87] S. Fieldston, *Little Cold Warriors*, cit., pp. 249-250.

[88] It will only be possible to make a real step forward when the materials of the Foster Parents Plan International: Italy, held at the University of Rhode Island Library, will become accessible.

twenty years of presence of Plan in Italy, the changes it underwent and the evolution of its programme. It would be interesting, for example, to examine the transition from individual aid to orphaned children and war victims to the more general and widespread support to families and communities. Another theme that is worth examining more in depth is the transition from policies of mere subsistence, implemented by providing only the essentials (i.e. food, shelter and primary health care), to the desire to support the emotional and intellectual development of the assisted children — especially within their family environment, which the donations had made more welcoming and safer — by virtue also of the organisation's growing interest in an education that could go beyond the primary school.[89]

Hence, we may only truly understand the programme's long-term evolution if we investigate these aspects in greater depth by going beyond the initial, even if essential, phases of settling in and settling down as well as some of the — positive — outcomes of individual stories. This will allow us to grasp the mechanisms and delicate balances of Plan's activities, especially in a country as politically complex as Italy, where competing forces co-existed and operated side by side.

[89] H. Dijsselbloem et al., *Child Sponsorship and Right-Based Interventions at Plan*, cit., pp. 135-136.

Home ownership at the origins of contemporary Italy. Politics and legislation (1945-1950)*

Bruno Bonomo**

Although mass access to private home ownership deeply marked the history of contemporary Italy, it remains one of the least studied topics in historiography. This article wishes to help fill this gap by analysing the origins of a process that made Italy one of the countries with the highest rate of home owners in Western Europe. Housing and construction policies aimed at encouraging and supporting small home ownership played a decisive role in this process. From a political and legislative perspective, the post-war years were fundamental: some of the main pieces that would make up the mosaic of a country of private home owners were laid down precisely in those years. In the article, I will examine the programmatic positions of parties as well as the political exchange that occurred in the Constituent Assembly and during parliamentary discussions on fundamental measures such as the Ina Casa plan and the Tupini and Aldisio laws on real estate development.
Key words: Home ownership, Contemporary Italy, Housing and construction policies, Parties, Constitution, Legislation

A nation of home owners

It is known that, in the present day, the Italian population is largely composed of individuals and families who own the house or flat they live in.[1] The rapid growth of home ownership as the main form of property entitlement and, accordingly, the decline of rental housing — especially in large and medium-sized cities — are relatively recent events, which have developed ever since the 1930s and, in particular, the 1950s.[2] They are the result of a complex

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[1] According to the most recent data at the time of writing this article, regarding 2018, these made up almost four-fifths of the total (79,2%): Istat, *Condizioni economiche delle famiglie e disuguaglianze, Condizioni abitative, Titolo di godimento dell'abitazione (in affitto o di proprietà)*, https://bit.ly/2SSLUTD (last accessed 24 February 2020).

[2] Marzio Barbagli, Maurizio Pisati, *Dentro e fuori le mura. Città e gruppi sociali dal 1400 a oggi*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2012, pp. 49-54. The data from the Italian National Institute of

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interweaving of economic, socio-cultural and political factors, among which we could mention housing market dynamics, especially the level and conditions of the supply of homes for rent and for sale; the widespread aspiration to home ownership, considered as a safe haven, a factor of economic security and a family asset to be passed on to future generations; and public policies. The latter have encouraged the extension of small home ownership in different ways: via credit facilities and mortgage support, tax benefits for the construction and sale of homes, a property tax regime, the allocation of affordable and social housing, and operations to dispose of the housing assets of public and social security institutions.

It is fair to say that the extension of private home ownership on all levels of the social ladder — particularly the middle class, but not only — is one of the most important elements of the "great transformation" that Italy experienced in the Republican period. Nevertheless, this phenomenon is also one of the least studied aspects of such transformation in historical studies. Whereas economists, sociologists and political scientists have examined private home ownership in relation to housing market dynamics, social stratification and inequality, life courses and family trajectories, and housing policies and welfare systems, including from a comparative perspective,[3] in the field of historical studies the ground remains largely unploughed. Occasionally, the relevance of the extension of private home ownership has been acknowledged in historical overviews of contemporary Italy, or in works with a more specific focus. Aurelio Lepre, for example, has listed "the steady growth in the number of privately owned

Statistics that the authors draw on indicate that, between 1951 and 2001, the percentage of families owning a home increased from 40% to 71,4% in Italy, and from 15,2% to 62,5% in major Italian cities; the highest growth rates were recorded in Milan (from 7,9% to 59,5%) and Turin (from 11,8% to 62,6%), whereas Naples moved from 12,4% to 50,1% and Rome from 20,3% to 64,6% (ivi, p. 300).

[3] Massimo Baldini, *La casa degli italiani*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2010, pp. 38-66, 152-156; Anna R. Minelli, *La politica per la casa*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2004; Marianna Filandri, Manuela Olagnero, Giovanni Semi, *Casa dolce casa? Italia, un paese di proprietari*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2020; Marianna Filandri, *Proprietari a tutti i costi. La disuguaglianza abitativa in Italia*, Rome, Carocci, 2015; Fabrizio Bernardi, Teresio Poggio, *Home ownership and social inequality in Italy*, in Karin Kurz, Hans Peter Blossfeld (eds.), *Home Ownership and Social Inequality in Comparative Perspective*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2004, pp. 187-232; Teresio Poggio, *Proprietà della casa, disuguaglianze sociali e vincoli del sistema abitativo*, "La Rivista delle Politiche Sociali", 2006, n. 3, pp. 27-40; Teresio Poggio, *La casa in proprietà nella stratificazione sociale*, "Meridiana", 2008, n. 62, pp. 53-69; Teresio Poggio, *The Housing Pillar of the Mediterranean welfare regime: relations between home ownership and other dimensions of welfare in Italy*, in Richard Ronald, Marja Elsinga (eds.), *Beyond Home Ownership. Housing, Welfare and Society*, London-New York, Routledge, 2012, pp. 51-67; Antonio Tosi, *La politica della casa*, in Ugo Ascoli (ed.), *Welfare State all'italiana*, Rom-Bari, Laterza, 1984, pp. 239-263; Antonio Tosi, *La produzione sociale della casa in proprietà: pratiche familiari, informale, politiche*, "Sociologia e ricerca sociale", 1987, n. 22, pp. 7-24; Marzio Barbagli, Maria Castiglioni, Gianpiero Dalla Zuanna, *Fare famiglia in Italia. Un secolo di cambiamenti*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2003.

homes" among the "improvements to the living conditions of Italians" in the years of the economic boom, stressing that, although "urban planners led a tough battle against building speculation, against what has been defined as the plundering of the cities", large part of the population looked upon the housing boom with very different eyes:

> In reality, property development — albeit distorted and to the benefit of small groups of speculators — responded to a deep need, to a hunger for homes that was very much felt. To obtain ownership of a sufficiently large flat seemed, to many Italians, an individual achievement that was too valuable, for the time being, to consider the social costs. On the other hand, if the external appearance of the most important cities decidedly changed for the worse, the interior of homes improved considerably.[4]

Other scholars have approached this phenomenon with a more critical stance, considering the rush to buy homes as "the most important expression" of that "acquisitive individualism" that characterised the years of the economic boom and paved the way for the "individualistic mutation", of which the children of the baby boomers would become the protagonists in subsequent decades.[5] The gradual extension of private ownership as the main form of property entitlement (accompanied by the spread of "second homes") has been identified as a key element in the history of consumption in Italy, from the post-war period to the present day.[6] Yet, safe for a few studies devoted to the social history of contemporary Italy that discuss the theme of home ownership mainly in relation to housing cultures, life styles and the consumption habits of that vast and composite social group that is the middle class,[7] the research on this topic is still very limited.

Frank Trentmann has rightly highlighted the fact that, at a global level, a "property-owning democracy" gained political relevance throughout the twentieth century, "as nations of tenants turned into home-owners", starting in the United States and the UK. Trentmann stressed that, especially in moderate and conservative circles, there was a tendency to consider the spread of home ownership as a guarantee of stability: home owners were considered as upright

[4] Aurelio Lepre, *Storia della prima Repubblica. L'Italia dal 1943 al 2003*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2004, pp. 171, 187.

[5] Giovanni Gozzini, *La mutazione individualista. Gli italiani e la televisione, 1954-2011*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 2011, p. 11.

[6] Enrica Asquer, *Casa e spazi domestici*, in Stefano Cavazza, Emanuela Scarpellini (eds.), *Storia d'Italia. Annali*, 27, *I consumi*, Turin, Einaudi, 2018, p. 155.

[7] Enrica Asquer, *Storia intima dei ceti medi. Una capitale e una periferia nell'Italia del miracolo economico*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 2011; Enrica Asquer, *Domesticità italiane: discorsi, conflitti, memorie dagli anni del boom*, in Emanuela Scarpellini (ed.), *I consumi della vita quotidiana*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2013, pp. 77-112; Filippo De Pieri e al. (eds.), *Storie di case. Abitare l'Italia del boom*, Rome, Donzelli, 2013. See also Enrica Asquer, *Famiglie e culture del consumo domestico dagli anni settanta a oggi. Spunti per una riflessione*, "Italia Contemporanea", 2015, n. 277, pp. 90-120.

and loyal citizens, bound by a direct interest in the fate of the community and able to build genuine bastions of family and freedom.[8] Moreover, at a European level, we must not forget that Italy — along with Spain, Portugal and Greece — has distinguished itself from other countries by reaching the highest rates of home ownership,[9] to which we must add a reduced availability of rented social housing: all typical features of a Mediterranean welfare model that relies heavily on the family and on family resources.[10]

The research on which the present article draws aims to help fill the above-mentioned historiographical gap by developing a reflection on the nexus between housing and building policies that were adopted in the post-war period and the extended access to private home ownership.[11] In particular, the article focuses on a number of fundamental political and legislative premises that developed in the second half of the 1940s. It is in this period that Italy — after it had emerged, "exhausted and disheartened",[12] from the Second World War — embarked on the road to reconstruction with a confident desire for redemption as well as a sense of bewilderment and insecurity in the face of the material and moral ruins left by Fascism and the war.[13] These premises contributed significantly to the definition of a framework within which, in the following decades, Italy would eventually reach one of the highest home ownership rates of Western Europe. With this in mind, I will examine the programmatic positions of the main political parties and some particularly important political and legislative issues: the works

[8] Frank Trentmann, *Empire of Things. How We Became a World of Consumers, from the Fifteenth Century to the Twenty-first*, London, Allen Lane, 2016, pp. 236-245.

[9] According to the Eurostat's most recent data at the time of writing this article, regarding 2018, the percentage of home owners in Italy (72,4%) was significantly higher than that of Germany (51,5%), France (65,1%), the UK (65,1%) and, to a lesser degree, the Netherlands (68,9%); the Belgian percentage is closer to the Italian one (72,7%); by contrast, higher values were indeed recorded for Greece (73,5%), Portugal (74,5%) and Spain (76,3%); the majority of Central and Eastern European countries exceeded the 80% threshold, whereas the European Union had an average of 69,3%: *Distribution of population by tenure status, type of household and income group — EU-SILC Survey*, https://bit.ly/2wJqtfb (last accessed 26 February 2020).

[10] Judith Allen e al., *Housing and Welfare in Southern Europe*, Oxford, Wiley-Blackwell, 2004; T. Poggio, *The Housing Pillar of the Mediterranean welfare regime*, cit. See also Francis G. Castles, Maurizio Ferrera, *Casa e welfare state. Le contraddizioni dei paesi sud-europei*, "Stato e Mercato", 1996, n. 48, pp. 409-431.

[11] In this article I further develop themes I discussed in the presentation *Politiche abitative e proprietà della casa in Italia nel secondo dopoguerra* [Housing policies and home ownership in Italy in the post-war period], presented at the tenth edition of Cantieri di storia Sissco (Modena, 18-20 September 2019), in the panel organized by Daniela Adorni, *La casa in Italia. Condizioni abitative e politiche pubbliche dal 1945 a oggi* [The home in Italy. Housing conditions and public policies from 1945 to the present day].

[12] Silvio Lanaro, *Storia dell'Italia repubblicana. L'economia, la politica, la cultura, la società dal dopoguerra agli anni '90*, Venice, Marsilio, 1992, p. 28.

[13] The author Natalia Ginzburg voiced this feeling of distressing precariousness with great effect when she highlighted how, in the post-war period, the "true face of the home" remained — for many — "the horrible face of the collapsed house or flat": *Il figlio dell'uomo* (1946), in Natalia Ginzburg, *Opere*, Milan, Mondadori, 2001, pp. 835-838.

of the Constituent Assembly and the Constitution; the legislative decrees of 1947 for the relaunch of the construction sector; and three legal measures that were passed in the crucial two-year period 1949-1950, namely the Ina Casa plan and the Tupini and Aldisio laws on real estate development.

Political parties and the home

Home ownership was a prominent issue in the development of the policy programme of political Catholicism in the last years of the Second World War, when debates about the evolution and the orientation of post-war Italy became ever more urgent and tangible. This is evident in the document known as the Code of Camaldoli, written by Pasquale Saraceno and Sergio Paronetto following a discussion that took place in the homonymous monastery in July 1943. By considering the availability of a home that is decent and adequate for a family's needs as "the most effective means of protecting and enhancing the worker's status, which the equalising constraints of the modern organisation of labour sometimes demean", Article 61 of the Code highlighted the fact that "ownership of the place in which the worker enjoys the fruits of his labour enables man to give the elements on which the affirmation of his status and the well-being of his family depend a more solid foundation, thus constituting a further incentive to develop his individual values".[14]

Access to small home ownership has indeed been one of the ideological cornerstones of the Christian Democracy (Democrazia Cristiana, hereafter DC) ever since its foundation, as the party's policy programmes of both the pre- and post-liberation period demonstrate. For instance, the programme for the Constituent Assembly — drafted during the DC's first national conference (24-27 April 1946) — placed the right to home ownership among those freedoms that were to form the basis of the State's renewal after the tragic experiences of Fascism and the war. It stated that, in order to achieve "*freedom from social injustice*", moving towards "a proportional equality of living conditions", all workers should be given the possibility to own a home. The section dedicated to the "freedom to own" mentioned the need to protect private property and to encourage its widest possible dissemination as a "*defence* of the freedom of the individual and the family", whereas the commitment to give anyone who worked — regardless of their class — access to property was summarised in the well-known formula, "not: 'all proletarians' but 'all owners'". In the field of housing, this commitment was to be translated into a set of coordinated measures, aimed at achieving a precise objective:

[14] *Per la comunità cristiana. Principi dell'ordinamento sociale a cura di un gruppo di studiosi amici di Camaldoli*, in "Civitas" (https://bit.ly/39sCkNr), 2013, n. 1-2, Special issue on the Code of Camaldoli (first edition 1945).

The democratic State will favour an economic and fiscal policy and an appropriate credit and cooperative system, so as to enable a progressive implementation of this programme: *home ownership for every blue-collar, white-collar and professional family*. Ownership of the *farm*, in first instance in places of land reclamation and colonisation, for peasant families.[15]

The situation seems to be very different if we look at the left side of the political spectrum. In the Left's policy programmes, the home and housing policies received less attention, whereas the relative proposals remained rather generic. If the programme of the Proletarian Unity Movement (Movimento di Unità Proletaria, hereafter MUP) of January 1943 contained one point on the "housing problem", which was to be tackled "with radical criteria so as to ensure, through the elimination of all forms of capitalist ownership and through appropriate constructions, a comfortable and healthy home for every working family",[16] not a single reference to this matter was made in the founding political statement of the Italian Socialist Party of Proletarian Unity (Partito Socialista Italiano di Unità Proletaria, hereafter PSIUP), born in August of that same year from the fusion between the Milanese MUP and the Roman-based Italian Socialist Party (Partito Socialista Italiano).[17] The questions that the PSIUP's direction declared to be "essential for a democratic reconstruction policy", in November 1945, included — along with the development of public works — the "complete solution of the problems of the homeless with the effective help of the cooperatives for the benefit of the victims".[18] The importance of cooperation in the housing sector was reaffirmed at the party's 24th conference (Florence, 11-17 April 1946): the report presented by Secretary Nenni listed the right to housing among those that were to be enshrined in the Constitution, whereas one of the last motions proposed to ensure "adequate state contributions in favour of workers' building cooperatives, help finance them and promote their development through appropriate subsidies for transport and concessions, and through tax reliefs".[19]

The references to housing contained in the policy programmes of the Italian Communist Party (Partito Comunista Italiano, hereafter PCI) are even less frequent and specific: housing and building policies are mentioned only very

[15] *I Congresso Nazionale della D.C. — Il programma della D.C. per la nuova Costituzione* (Rome, 24-27 April 1946), in *Atti e documenti della Democrazia Cristiana, 1943-1967*, Rome, Cinque Lune, 1968, vol. I, pp. 231-254: quotes on pp. 242-246; italics in the original.

[16] *Programma del Movimento di Unità Proletaria per la Repubblica Socialista, 10 gennaio 1943*, in Simone Neri Serneri (ed.) *Il Partito socialista nella Resistenza. I documenti e la stampa clandestina (1943-1945)*, Pisa, Nistri-Lischi, 1988, p. 46.

[17] *La Dichiarazione politica costitutiva del PSIUP, 25 agosto 1943*, in S. Neri Serneri (ed.), *Il Partito socialista nella Resistenza*, cit., pp. 53-58.

[18] Franco Pedone (ed.), *Il Partito Socialista Italiano nei suoi congressi*, vol. V, *1942-1955*, Milan, Edizioni del Gallo, 1968, pp. 66-68.

[19] F. Pedone (ed.), *Il Partito Socialista Italiano nei suoi congressi*, vol. V, *1942-1955*, cit., pp. 72, 97-98.

rarely. One of the few exceptions is the election programme of the Constituent Assembly (May 1946), which called for urgent economic measures to tackle "the misery of workers, the homeless and veterans, unemployment, insufficient wages and salaries, the troubling increase in tuberculosis and child mortality"; in terms of housing policies, though, it limited itself to calling for "a vast programme of public works in the cities and the countryside and, first and foremost, the systematic reconstruction of homes, with the intervention of the State and the municipalities so as to stimulate personal initiative and replace it if required for the good of the nation".[20]

The universal right to housing was recognised in the document outlining the objectives of the unity of action between the PCI and the PSIUP (October 1946). Although it called — in "defence of the worker's status and human dignity" — for the enactment of social legislation that would guarantee "work for all, ensuring the minimum necessary to live[,] housing, schooling, medical care and assistance with illness, accidents and old age", it did not indicate how or in what form such right should be obtained.[21] Finally, in the founding charter of the Popular Democratic Front, the only reference to housing (or, more generally, to a domestic-family sphere) appeared in the last entry of the second objective that the alliance proposed, namely "a concrete defence of the hearth and home".[22]

Housing in the Constitution

The Constitution of the Italian Republic makes only one specific reference to housing, in the second clause of Article 47:

> The Republic encourages and safeguards savings in all forms. It regulates, co-ordinates and oversees the operation of credit.
> The Republic promotes house and farm ownership and direct and indirect shareholding in the main national enterprises through the use of private savings.

The article is formulated in such a way as to promote and safeguard all types of savings and to direct private savings — primarily those deriving from work, of moderate extent and gradual formation — towards a limited number of

[20] *Il programma del Partito comunista per la Repubblica democratica di lavoratori*, 8 May 1946, in *La politica dei comunisti dal quinto al sesto congresso. Risoluzioni e documenti, raccolti a cura dell'Ufficio di segreteria del PCI*, snt, pp. 36-42: quotes on p. 40.

[21] *Unità d'azione tra Partito Comunista e Partito Socialista per il rinnovamento della vita politica e sociale italiana*, 27 October 1946, in *La politica dei comunisti dal quinto al sesto congresso*, cit., pp. 135-140: quotes on p. 136.

[22] Comitato d'organizzazione del Fronte democratico popolare, *Documenti presentati alla I assemblea nazionale del Fronte democratico popolare per il lavoro, la pace, la libertà: 1 febbraio 1948*, snt, pp. 11-13.

destinations, whose economic and social relevance is widely acknowledged: in the first place, the ownership "[of] a home, that is, the house or flat in its function as a dwelling for direct use by the owner".[23] Hence, the Constitution does not expressly provide for the right to housing. As the doctrine states, the article in question "only indicates that it favours home ownership intended as the home of the owner […] and their family", aiming to protect "the accumulated savings in order to buy the house or flat […], providing a constitutional basis for the various benefits for the purchase of the first home".[24]

It was the Christian Democrat assembly member Tommaso Zerbi who promoted the second clause in the Constituent Assembly, during the session of 19 May 1947. The text of the article that was initially presented was far more concise: "The Republic safeguards savings; it regulates, co-ordinates and oversees the operation of credit." Zerbi presented — on behalf of a large group of Christian Democrat MPs — an amendment that proposed to replace the text with a broader formulation, one that furthermore detailed the types of investment towards which people's savings should be directed:

> The Republic safeguards savings in all forms and encourages real investment through the use of private savings by promoting the spread of house and farm ownership, and of direct and indirect shareholding in the main national enterprises.
> The Republic regulates, co-ordinates and oversees the operation of credit.[25]

As the proposer explained, the amendment ultimately aimed to protect "the small savings of the working classes" from inflation, since the latter "are more often than not forced into the simplest forms of monetary investment, such as bank deposits, government bonds and debentures"; in the face of the strong devaluation that had been recorded for many years, similar fixed-income investments exposed small savers — whether they were workers, artisans,

[23] Fabio Merusi, *Art. 47*, in Giuseppe Branca (ed.), *Commentario della Costituzione*, *Rapporti economici*, vol. 3, *Art. 45-47*, Bologna, Zanichelli, 1980, p. 186. On private savings: Stefania Baroncelli, *Art. 47*, in Raffaele Bifulco, Alfonso Celotto, Marco Olivetti (eds.), *Commentario alla Costituzione*, vol. I, Turin, Utet giuridica, 2006, pp. 945-957; Vezio Crisafulli e al. (eds.), *Commentario breve alla Costituzione*, Padua, Cedam, 2008, pp. 481-482.

[24] V. Crisafulli e al. (eds.), *Commentario breve alla Costituzione*, cit., p. 483. Yet, over time, constitutional case law has counted among the "inviolable rights of man" — namely those that "the Republic recognises and guarantees" in accordance with Article 2 of the Constitution — not only those the Constitution expressly qualified as such (i.e. personal freedom, freedom of domicile, freedom of communication, right of defence) or merely envisaged (e.g. freedom of thought, religious freedom, freedom of association and the right to health), but also many others: in fact, these include the right to housing, which the Constitutional Court has qualified as "inviolable" through sentence 404/1988 and as "fundamental" through sentence 217/1988 (Ivi, p. 10).

[25] Parliamentary proceedings (hereafter PP), Discussions of the Constituent Assembly (hereafter DCA), 1947, vol. IV, session of Monday 19 May 1947, pp. 4023-4067: quote on p. 4025.

employees or pensioners — to a dramatic reduction in purchasing power.[26] When he illustrated the types of investment mentioned in the amendment, Zerbi stressed that he hoped "first and foremost [for] the spread of home ownership", which the State should encourage through specific benefits.[27] The article was approved following a number of changes and edits that I am unable to explore in detail here, in a formulation that was very similar to the final one cited above. However, Zerbi's amendment was not voted by left-wing groups: while "generally in agreement with the principle that dictated [it]", as the Communist MP Renzo Laconi explained, they felt that the subject matter exceeded the scope of the constitution.[28]

The home was also the subject of other debates in the Constituent Assembly that deserve attention here, even if the proposed housing-related measures were eventually not included in the constitutional text. The third sub-commission's debate about the economic and social guarantees for families — resulting in the formulation of Article 31 of the Constitution — was based on three reports, presented by Lina Merlin (Partito Socialista Italiano, hereafter PSI) and by two co-speakers, Maria Federici (DC) and Teresa Noce (PCI).[29] The first to intervene was Federici, who stressed the need for appropriate provisions in terms of work, wages, family property, home care, working women's rights, taxes, social insurance and welfare. In this context, home ownership would have represented an essential tool to guarantee security and emancipation for the family:

> Based on the premise that the family has the right to own and pass on the family inheritance, and that it can escape from the servitude of the proletariat only at this condition, we acknowledge the need to make it possible for all families to achieve home ownership, or farm ownership (for the rural population) and to draw benefit from the redistribution of real estate ownership and national wealth.[30]

Federici therefore suggested to include a number of articles in the Constitution, the first of which offered universal access to decent, hygienic and sufficiently spacious single-family home ownership:

[26] The extent of the problem of inflation in the post-war period becomes evident if we consider free market prices of industrial and agricultural goods, which in December 1946 were respectively 32 and 59 times higher than those of 1938: Rolf Petri, *Dalla ricostruzione al miracolo economico*, in Giovanni Sabbatucci, Vittorio Vidotto (eds.), *Storia d'Italia*, vol. V, *La Repubblica. 1943-1963*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 1997, p. 317.

[27] PP, DCA, 1947, vol. IV, session of Monday 19 May 1947, pp. 4025-4026.

[28] PP, DCA, 1947, vol. IV, session of Monday 19 May 1947, p. 4045.

[29] Article 31 of the Constitution reads as follows: "The Republic assists the formation of the family and the fulfilment of its duties, with particular consideration for large families, through economic measures and other benefits. / The Republic protects mothers, children and the young by adopting necessary provisions".

[30] PP, DCA, Atti della Commissione per la Costituzione, vol. II, Relazioni e proposte, Relazione dell'on. Signora Federici Maria sulle garanzie economico-sociali per l'assistenza della famiglia, pp. 96-99: quote on p. 97.

It is the State's duty to provide economic and social guarantees for the preservation of the natural right to the family and for the family's existence. Thus: 1°) […]; 2°) the following will be guaranteed: the right to work, to earn what is necessary to support oneself and one's family (family wage) […]; access to ownership of a single home, or farm, for all heads of the household, based on the criterion of the redistribution of property and land wealth in order to make all social classes entitled to goods, with a particular consideration for large families […].[31]

Merlin presented three articles. The first aimed at guaranteeing the "minimum economic conditions of existence for every citizen and therefore for every family":

The State must ensure that all citizens have the minimum requirements for existence in terms of food, clothing, housing and health care; in particular, it must provide for the needs of those who are unemployed through no fault of their own or incapable of working because of old age or disability.[32]

The right to housing was therefore included — without any clarifications being provided as to how it should be implemented — as a prerequisite for ensuring that economic insecurity would not preclude the possibility of forming and maintaining a family: as Merlin herself explained, "[w]hat is of particular value is the security of the home, to which the attention is drawn, given its fundamental impact on family life".[33] Finally, in the last of the three reports, by Noce, the home was not mentioned at all, nor was it included in the articles she proposed.[34]

The process that led to the formulation of Article 31 also included a discussion on the family by the first sub-commission, which was introduced by the reports of Camillo Corsanego (DC) and Nilde Iotti (PCI). Again, not even a single reference to the theme of housing was made in the report of the Communist assembly member.[35] Corsanego, on his part, proposed five articles for the defence and the reinforcement of the family, considered as a "natural institution endowed with innate rights, preceding and superior to any positive law", and as a "main and essential element of society". The last of these articles

[31] PP, DCA, Atti della Commissione per la Costituzione, vol. II, Relazioni e proposte, Relazione dell'on. Signora Federici Maria sulle garanzie economico-sociali per l'assistenza della famiglia, pp. 98-99.

[32] PP, DCA, Atti della Commissione per la Costituzione, vol. II, Relazioni e proposte, Relazione dell'on. Signora Merlin Angelina sulle garanzie economiche e sociali per l'esistenza della famiglia, pp. 100-101.

[33] PP, DCA, Atti della Commissione per la Costituzione, vol. II, Relazioni e proposte, Relazione dell'on. Signora Merlin Angelina sulle garanzie economiche e sociali per l'esistenza della famiglia, pp. 100-101.

[34] PP, DCA, Atti della Commissione per la Costituzione, vol. II, Relazioni e proposte, Relazione dell'on. Signora Noce Teresa sulle garanzie economico-sociali per l'esistenza della famiglia, pp. 102-103.

[35] PP, DCA, Atti della Commissione per la Costituzione, vol. II, Relazioni e proposte, Relazione dell'on. Signora Jotti [*sic*] Leonilde sulla famiglia, pp. 55-57.

regarded the economic protection of the family. Other than providing a favourable tax and inheritance system, the State would have to facilitate, "by means of the family wage and other measures, the gradual access to ownership for all and the constitution of a family property, of which the single and separate house — of the 'domestic hearth' type — constitutes the central element".[36] It is worth highlighting that, when claiming home ownership for each family, the DC's assembly members had a traditional form of housing in mind, with an essentially rural matrix — quite different from the multi-storey apartment buildings that would become the dominant feature of the ever more urbanised Italy of subsequent decades.

Finally, the theme of the home also entered the third sub-commission's discussion about the right to ownership. However, in this case the subject of the debate was almost exclusively the peasant home, which obviously had very distinct characteristics and raised specific questions related to the inhabitants' work activities.[37] A report by Paolo Emilio Taviani — on the link between personal freedom and private property obtained through work and savings — opened the discussion, which in fact focused on land ownership and the need to lay the constitutional foundations for land reform in the near future. Urban real estate property entered the debate only marginally. Initially, Giuseppe Togni pointed out that limits should be placed on its concentration, as with the planned interventions in land ownership prescribed by the relative reform; in fact, the Christian Democrat MP asked for whatever reason "the great building estates should not be taken into consideration as well", arguing that "a property of 700 or 1,000 flats [is] as harmful to society as a property of 2,000 hectares of land". Next, as Togni exchanged views with Taviani and Fanfani about adding a clause to an already approved article on ownership, regarding the possibility of "splitting land and homes between individual farmers and users" where this would benefit the whole community, Teresa Noce intervened. The Communist MP stated that "the principle of land [could be] accepted, but not that of the homes": while "the farmer who works the land may well be entitled to own that very land", as the latter represents "not only a use but also a tool, a right", "the user living in a home does not necessarily have the same right".

[36] This was particularly relevant for large families, which according to Corsanego were a "comforting symptom of physical and moral health". The text of the proposed article reads as follows: "The State will take appropriate measures to make it easier for the less well-off to start a family and to make it less financially burdensome, for large families in particular, to meet their family obligations". PP, DCA, Atti della Commissione per la Costituzione, vol. II, Relazioni e proposte, Relazione del deputato Corsanego Camillo sulla famiglia, pp. 53-54.

[37] The discussion led to the development of Article 44 of the Constitution, especially the first clause: "For the purpose of ensuring the rational use of land and equitable social relationships, the law imposes obligations and constraints on private ownership of land; it sets limitations to the size of property according to the region and the agricultural area; encourages and imposes land reclamation, the conversion of latifundia and the reorganisation of farm units; and assists small and medium-sized properties".

She concluded by saying that, although urban property could also be divided, this regarded "an entirely different problem" that the Constitution should not deal with in such detail.[38]

Two decrees to relaunch the construction sector

After the forced decrease in — and the eventual interruption of — building works during the Second World War, in the first post-war years the construction sector went through a period of stagnation. It was decided that all available materials and resources should be used to repair damaged homes, to rebuild those destroyed by the war, and to build shelters and social housing for the many homeless; the construction of new private homes was prohibited until April 1947.[39] Once the greatest emergency had passed, the government passed two important measures on residential construction, both aimed at stimulating the relaunch of the construction sector so as to tackle the serious housing shortage across the country, which had led to a widespread recourse to precarious housing solutions and situations of overcrowding and home sharing.[40]

The first of the two measures was the provisional Head of State's Legislative Decree 399/1947. It was proposed by the Minister of Public Works of the third De Gasperi government, Emilio Sereni, approved by the Council of Ministers, and then promulgated by Enrico De Nicola on 8 May 1947.[41] The decree provided for state aid for the construction of social housing — to be rented out or allocated on a rent-to-own basis — in favour of the Autonomous Social Housing Institutes (Istituti autonomi per le case popolari, hereafter IACP), of the National Institute for State Employees' Housing (Istituto nazionale per le case degli impiegati dello Stato, hereafter INCIS), of local administrations, and of public bodies aiming to build housing for their employees. The aid covered a very generous 50 per cent of the expenditure required to purchase the land and construct the buildings. For the remaining expenses, the above-mentioned bodies were entitled to take out loans supported by state

[38] PP, DCA, Commissione per la Costituzione, Discussioni, Terza Sottocommissione, from 26 July 1946 to 26 October 1946, concise account of the sessions from Wednesday 25 September 1946 to Thursday 3 October 1946, pp. 67-153: quotes on pp. 135, 143-144.

[39] Giovanni Ferracuti, Maurizio Marcelloni, *La casa. Mercato e programmazione*, Turin, Einaudi, 1982, pp. 3-9, 20-23.

[40] On the evolution of the construction sector, from its relaunch around 1950 to the oil crisis of 1973, in relation to public policies and the main measures adopted in the field of urban planning and constructions, see Enrico Berbenni, *La grande espansione: dal primo al secondo ciclo edilizio*, "Storia urbana", 2015, n. 148, pp. 103-150.

[41] Decreto legislativo del Capo provvisorio dello Stato 8 May 1947, n. 399, *Provvidenze dirette ad agevolare la ripresa delle costruzioni edilizie*.

subsidies provided for in the consolidated law on affordable and social housing.[42] Moreover, the Ministry of Public Works was authorised to grant private builders and building consortia specialised in reconstructions an incentive grant that varied according to the surface area of the homes to be built, whereas tax benefits were established for their commerce and for the loans that the purchasers would take out.

The second measure is the more interesting one for the purpose of this article: the provisional Head of State's Legislative Decree 1600, presented by Umberto Tupini — the newly appointed minister of Public Works of the fourth De Gasperi government, which took office at the end of May — and promulgated on 22 December 1947. This decree modified the previous one, extending the aforementioned state support and contributions for social housing to include those companies that were set up to build — on a non-profit basis — social homes to be rented out with a future purchase agreement, as well as to cooperatives of public employees and pensioners, professionals and members of commercial and industrial companies.[43] Hence, a few months after the left-wing parties were ousted from the government and the Ministry of Public Works moved from the PCI to the DC, both housing cooperatives and private companies set up to build rent-to-own homes were — in terms of state subsidies — essentially placed on the same level as public bodies appointed to operate in the field of affordable and social housing.[44]

It is no surprise that the measure was favourably received by private actors in the construction sector, who strove to make the most of the new opportunities that the legislation offered.[45] The case of the Società Generale Immobiliare (hereafter SGI) is interesting in this regard: based in Rome and subject to the control of the Special Administration of the Holy See as the majority shareholder, this major real estate developer expanded its reach — thanks also to this measure — from the capital to numerous other Italian cities.[46] Indeed, in various prov-

[42] *Testo unico delle disposizioni sull'edilizia popolare ed economica*, approved by royal decree on 28 April 1938, n. 1165. The contribution of the State was also granted to the Ente edilizio di Reggio Calabria as well as to land transformation, irrigation and colonisation authorities, for houses that were meant to become part of rural villages.

[43] Decreto legislativo del Capo provvisorio dello Stato 22 December 1947, n. 1600, *Modificazione del d.l. 8 maggio 1947, n. 399, recante provvidenze per la ripresa delle costruzioni edilizie*. This second decree extended state support and contributions to the Ente nazionale per le Tre Venezie and the National Social Security Institute for Journalists.

[44] This process was fine-tuned by the Tupini law, on which I will come back further ahead.

[45] A highly critical assessment of this measure is that of Giovanni Ferracuti and Maurizio Marcelloni, according to whom it set in motion "a degenerative process that made organisations and *companies with the sole purpose of making profit* thrive, opening one of the blackest pages of collusion — especially in the 1950s — between political leadership, the bureaucratic apparatus and businesses" (G. Ferracuti, M. Marcelloni, *La casa*, cit., p. 24; italics in the original).

[46] For a general overview: Paola Puzzuoli (ed.), *La Società generale immobiliare Sogene: storia, archivio, testimonianze*, Rome, Palombi, 2003. On the building projects in some of the main Italian cities: Bruno Bonomo, *Grande impresa e sviluppo urbano: l'attività della*

inces the SGI promoted the formation of the Institutes for affordable and social housing (Istituti per l'edilizia economica e popolare, hereafter IEEP): non-profit joint-stock companies composed of industrial companies, banking and insurance institutions, and public bodies, to build rent-to-own homes for their employees and collaborators, ranging from junior and subordinate staff to executives.[47] Relying on the generous financial support of the State, as well as on the technical and economic direction of the SGI, which was responsible for the construction of the buildings, in subsequent years the IEEPs built around ten thousand flats in some fifteen cities. The building projects that they carried out — including in posh residential areas, such as the Trieste district and Monte Mario in Rome, Albaro in Genoa, or the Vomero in Naples — contributed to shape the "new city" of the 1950s with interventions that reflected an idea of urban living centred on apartment buildings, modern home comfort and, especially, home ownership.[48]

The Ina Casa plan

In February 1949, the most important public intervention plan in the residential construction sector of the post-war period was promulgated: the Ina Casa plan. Inspired by Keynesian economic doctrines and Catholic solidarity values, the plan — proposed by Amintore Fanfani, an exponent of the Dossetti group within the DC and minister of Labour and Social Welfare in the fifth De Gasperi government — aimed at softening the blow of unemployment among blue-collar workers, and was to be funded through contributions from employees, employers and the State.[49] As Paola Di Biagi rightly observed, the

Società generale immobiliare a Roma nel secondo dopoguerra, "Storia urbana", 2006, n. 112, pp. 167-195; Bruno Bonomo, *Strategie e realizzazioni di un grande promotore edilizio privato: la Società generale immobiliare*, in Francesco Bartolini (ed.), *Città a confronto. Lo sviluppo edilizio a Roma e Milano nella seconda metà del Novecento*, "Dimensioni e problemi della ricerca storica", 2006, n. 1, pp. 208-214; Bruno Bonomo, *Il quartiere delle Valli. Costruire Roma nel secondo dopoguerra*, Milan, FrancoAngeli, 2007; Fabrizio Pedone, *Esportare l'alta civiltà edilizia in una città mediterranea: la Società Generale Immobiliare a Palermo*, in Angelo Bertoni, Lidia Piccioni (eds.), *Raccontare, leggere e immaginare la città contemporanea / Raconter, lire et imaginer la ville contemporaine*, Florence, Olschki, 2018, pp. 47-57; Fabrizio Pedone, *La città che non c'era. Lo sviluppo urbano di Palermo nel secondo dopoguerra*, Palermo, Istituto poligrafico europeo, 2019, pp. 38-50.

[47] Among the companies and public bodies that joined the various IEEPs we could mention Montecatini, Italcable, Snia-Viscosa, Falck, Dalmine, Anic, Assicurazioni Generali, Ras, Banco di Sicilia, Banco di Napoli, Inail and the Cassa per il Mezzogiorno.

[48] See the promotional volume by the Istituto centrale per l'edilizia economica e popolare (ed.), *Stato ed aziende in cooperazione per la casa in proprietà alla famiglia*, Rome, Istituto grafico tiberino, 1950.

[49] Law 43 of 28 February 1949, *Provvedimenti per incrementare l'occupazione operaia, agevolando la costruzione di case per lavoratori*, published in the Official Gazette n. 54 on 7 March 1949.

plan strongly contributed to the growth of home ownership: nearly seventy per cent of the over three hundred fifty thousand homes built during two seven-year periods (1949-1955, 1956-1963) were allocated on a rent-to-own basis.[50]

In reality, the bill that Fanfani presented in the Chamber of Deputies, in July 1948, suggested that *all* homes would be rented out for the duration of 25 years with a future purchase agreement. In fact, as the minister explained, the plan's anticipated results — other than creating employment, which was its main objective, and reducing the shortage of housing — included that of increasing home ownership by making workers invest in it, "following the spirit and the letter of Article 47 of the Constitution".[51] Likewise, the majority report of the Labour Commission that accompanied the bill — presented by Mariano Rumor (DC) — emphasised its "strong social purpose" in allowing the beneficiaries of the dwellings to own them at one point, "thus responding to a social requirement advanced by the Constitution of the Italian Republic (art. 47)". The minority report — presented by Giuseppe Di Vittorio (PCI) — did not question the allocation on a rent-to-own basis, therefore implicitly accepting the principle of home ownership, but only the excessively high monthly fees that the beneficiaries would be charged, which would severely penalise low-wage workers.[52]

Throughout the bill's discussion in the Chamber of Deputies, various interventions touched upon the theme of home ownership. The Christian Democrat Raffaele Lettieri, declaring to be "enthusiastic about the Fanfani plan", solemnly confirmed that "all, without exception, whether they are professionals, office workers or labourers, aspire to own their home as a sublime shrine to the family".[53] By contrast, the Socialist Fernando Santi conveyed the disapproval of his group — even if it agreed on the plan's twofold purpose to create employment and build homes — regarding not only the funding mechanism (which originally involved a loan imposed on workers) and the housing allocation system (those who would have contributed to finance the plan had to

[50] Paola Di Biagi, *La "città pubblica" e l'Ina-Casa*, in Ead. (ed.), *La grande ricostruzione. Il piano Ina-Casa e l'Italia degli anni '50*, Rome, Donzelli, 2001, p. 19. Another reference book on the Ina Casa plan was published in the wake of the plan's fiftieth anniversary: Istituto Luigi Sturzo, *Fanfani e la casa. Gli anni Cinquanta e il modello italiano di* welfare state. *Il piano Ina-Casa*, Soveria Mannelli (CZ), Rubbettino, 2002; on the bill's parliamentary discussion and the process leading to its approval, see the essays by Augusto d'Angelo, *Problemi e questioni nell'iter legislativo del piano Ina-Casa*, pp. 69-109; and Umberto Gentiloni Silveri, *Il dibattito parlamentare: governo e opposizione a confronto*, pp. 111-144.

[51] PP, the Chamber of Deputies (hereafter CD), Documenti - Disegni di legge e relazioni, 1948, n. 48, Disegno di legge *Provvedimenti per incrementare l'occupazione operaia, agevolando la costruzione di case per i lavoratori*, session of 12 July 1948, p. 5.

[52] PP, CD, Documenti - Disegni di legge e relazioni, 1948, n. 48-A, Relazione della XI Commissione permanente sul disegno di legge *Provvedimenti per incrementare l'occupazione operaia, agevolando la costruzione di case per i lavoratori*, presented on 26 July 1948: quotes on p. 2.

[53] PP, CD, Discussioni, afternoon session of 28 July 1948, p. 1469.

draw lots), but also because the dwellings themselves would have to be given in ownership. Santi, in fact, expressed the Socialists' "strong disagreement" with what they defined "forced ownership". The problem did not only reside in the fact that the spread of private home ownership would be fuelled "by the sacrifice of the community, in this case even a poor community, as was that of the workers" who were called upon to finance the plan — a more general consideration had to be made. Obviously, it was to be hoped that all could have access to housing, but Santi — speaking from his position as a leader of the CGIL, Italy's most important trade union — wondered what the real needs were of those who did not own a home or lived in particularly difficult conditions:

> What people need […] is a healthy and decent home at a reasonable rent. They do not need to own it, for becoming a home owner at the conditions set out in the Honourable Fanfani's project means putting a stone around your neck and dragging it for a long time — a quarter of a century. For an average three- to four-bedroom flat a worker would need to pay some four and a half thousand lire per month, and for the duration of 25 years […]. Now, I consider such a commitment to be unacceptable, also from my viewpoint as a trade union organiser, because the indebted worker ends up in a situation of considerable inferiority vis-à-vis his employer. What conditions would he find himself in if he was laid off or came down with illness? This regulation therefore ends up reducing the worker's freedom, as his position of debt will put him in a condition of inferiority, [and] he will not be able to move, act and react as he would if this commitment did not crush him.[54]

Pia Lombardi Colini (DC) had a completely different view of the plan: although she admitted that the workers' contribution represented a sacrifice that "is problematic and rightfully weighs a great deal on all of us who take an interest in their situation", she flatly rejected the idea that the plan itself could lead to "an abuse of the freedom of the workers" themselves. Rather, she called attention to the positive value of savings — even when compulsory — aimed at achieving home ownership:

> But let us briefly consider the advantage that they can gain from the idea and practice of saving; this principle of stability based on the fact that one starts putting aside, even if by means of imposition, something that represents such a security for the future; this projection of us that is the possession, or ownership, of even only the most basic asset as is the home, the seat of the family, the seat of everyday life at present and in the future, this beginning to put down roots — the foundation of the family unit.[55]

The problem of the excessively high monthly fees that the beneficiaries of the dwellings would be charged over the following 25 years, in compliance with the rent-to-own agreement, was also raised by the Communist MP Vincenzo Cavallari, even if he made no objections of principle to the rent-to-own agree-

[54] PP, CD, Discussioni, morning session of 30 July 1948, p. 1526.
[55] PP, CD, Discussioni, afternoon session of 30 July 1948, p. 1568.

ments in themselves.[56] In the rest of the discussion, the Chamber approved an article proposed by Giuseppe Togni that aimed at reducing the amount of rent due by using the employers' payments: in the proposer's words, this would have "truly [made] the home accessible, without too much sacrifice, to the workers chosen by fate".[57] The left-wing groups — who agreed with Fanfani on this matter — said they were in favour of using part of the employers' payments to reduce the rent, provided that the remainder went to the workers who were not selected among the beneficiaries of the homes. Nonetheless, while the Christian Democrats — through Palmiro Foresi — again evoked the issue of access to home ownership, which would have been conveniently facilitated thanks to the reduction of the rent, the exponents of the Left refrained from making any comments in this regard.[58]

Another Christian Democrat, Filadelfio Caroniti, delivered a paean to home ownership, as he outlined an amendment that he had prepared with seven party colleagues. It provided for the allocation of homes to all workers who were willing to pay a rent ten times higher than the amount provided for in the plan:

> If a tenfold share is not enough, then we should establish a share of 12, 15, 20 times as much: but we must give these workers and savers the certainty of having a home! We shall thus reward the sacrifice of the worker who wishes nothing more than to succeed in owning a home, given his deep love for the sacred institution of the family. Home ownership represents the greatest aspiration of his life, the guarantee of a better future for himself and his loved ones.[59]

The bill next moved to the Senate, where the Labour Commission and the Finance and Treasury Commission changed it in various points. In particular, to meet the needs of workers with limited economic means and therefore unable to afford a rent-to-own home, it was decided that half of the dwellings to be built would be rented out.[60] When the bill reached the House floor, the debate was reopened. The Communist Senator Paolo Fortunati expressed his party's reservations, demanding that the financial costs of the plan would be borne by the richest classes, that more homes would be built than planned,

[56] PP, CD, Discussioni, afternoon session of 31 July 1948, p. 1575.

[57] PP, CD, Discussioni, afternoon session of 2 August 1948, p. 1732.

[58] PP, CD, Discussioni, afternoon session of 2 August 1948, pp. 1734-1735.

[59] PP, CD, Discussioni, afternoon session of 4 August 1948, p. 1862. The Chamber did not approve the amendment.

[60] In reality, as I have mentioned, there were eventually far more rent-to-own homes than rental homes. In this regard, it must be noted that the law extending the plan for the second seven-year period increased the quota of homes to be assigned on a rent-to-own basis to two thirds, while also allowing the tenants of homes initially only rented out to switch to a rent-to-own contract: Alice Sotgia, *Ina Casa Tuscolano. Biografia di un quartiere romano*, Milan, FrancoAngeli, 2010, p. 69. See also the decisions on cooperatives: *infra*, note 67. For a case study on the methods and timeframes of the shift from rental to rent-to-own contracts, and from the latter to ownership: Costanza Bonelli, *Quando la città pubblica diviene privata. Il quartiere Tiburtino a Roma*, "Città e Storia", 2014, n. 2, pp. 223-239, in particular pp. 232-234.

and that the whole programme would be "clearly and explicitly set out with the general prospect of reforming the structure of the market, in order to change the type of income distribution in Italy". Among the points of criticism, he mentioned the allocation of homes in ownership, which in his view should be "kept to a minimum". On the one hand, even from the viewpoint of the "supporters of an economic organisation permanently hinged on small ownership" (to which Fortunati boasted that he did not belong), it had to be acknowledged that the latter had "an economic and historical reason for being" when it was the result of "an economic, market achievement", and not a "more or less paternalistic facilitation or concession". On the other hand, the decision to allocate homes in ownership to individual citizens clashed — in his view — with the political premises of the majority itself:

> Working class solidarity is the premise: solidarity in function — if the argument makes sense — of a particular differential situation of unease among the working masses themselves. But you cannot fix this situation over time. It may be that, for a number of future circumstances, the current recipient of the house or flat will be in a different economic situation. So, do you want to consolidate, once and for all, the situation obtained by drawing lots or through allocation? This is not rational and, mind you, it is not rational even from your own perspective. Solidarity expresses class interests, not the interests of individuals![61]

Carlo Cerruti — another senator of the PCI and a minority rapporteur of the Finance and Treasury Commission — was pleased that, by accepting the indications of the minority, the Commission itself had made a number of improvements to the bill: the workers' compulsory loan and housing vouchers were abolished; the idea to allocate dwellings by making people draw lots was abandoned; the allocation of all homes in ownership was cancelled. Yet, despite these improvements, the plan still contained "serious defects and major inconsistencies": among these, Cerruti listed funding sources, "the mediocre results" that would be achieved in terms of both employment and number of built rooms, and the fact that half of the dwellings would be given in ownership.[62] The Communists, he continued, firmly preferred rent to rent-to-own agreements, since

> the right to home ownership, which is exclusive by its very nature, is in stark contrast with the present and future need to extend the benefit to the widest number of poor and less well-off workers. Indeed, in our case the private owner is eventually entitled to, and disposes of, the dwelling at their will, and on their death this same right is transferred to their legal heirs, and so on. Now, we wish to observe that, if the need to possess a house or flat is a need that generates a natural right to such entitlement, the allocation of new housing by way of ownership creates a perpetual right that, today more than ever, must be postponed in order to guarantee a similar right to the great mass of those who suffer as a result of lacking or insufficient housing.[63]

[61] PP, the Senate of the Republic (hereafter SR), Discussioni, afternoon session of 16 December 1948, pp. 4571-4573.

[62] PP, SR, Discussioni, afternoon session of 17 December 1948, p. 4618.

[63] PP, SR, Discussioni, afternoon session of 17 December 1948, p. 4623.

Cerruti therefore again highlighted the serious defect of the right to home ownership, which "eternally fixes and limits the benefit", even when the conditions for entitlement are no longer met (e.g. following an improvement in the assignee's economic circumstances or a reduction in the number of family members). A rental agreement, instead, "would extend it to other individuals through a continuous, fair and beseeched alternation" in housing occupancy. Moreover, the problem remained that "only very few office and factory workers" could afford to pay the monthly fees of a rent-to-own contract:

> At most, only very fortunate working families will be able to join in, [such as] retailers, small entrepreneurs, professionals, company managers, and so on; but it is disastrous that precisely the great mass of the neediest and worst off workers would be excluded from any benefits for a long time.[64]

These last observations refer to what can indeed be considered a significant factor in the Ina Casa plan, which — as Marialuisa-Lucia Sergio, among others, has observed — overall seemed to be in line with "the commitment […] to socially advance the middle classes" that represented "a cornerstone of the majority's economic policies".[65] In Cerruti's opinion, there was an obvious injustice: it was, in fact, "right and humane" that the funds gathered for the plan should be "directed first and foremost to the relief of the poorest, and not to the exclusive benefit of those who already possess a certain amount of wealth that enables them to overcome the worst hardships as best they can". For the Communist senator, the share of homes to allocate on a rent-to-own basis should therefore be further reduced, if not eliminated: in the allocation of funds, they should receive not more than one eighth of the amount allocated to rental homes.[66]

It was, instead, the Christian Democrat Leopoldo Rubinacci, a majority rapporteur of the Labour Commission, who energetically defended the allocation of homes in ownership (again via the rent-to-own mechanism), stressing its high social value:

> I must say that I consider it a socially valuable general interest to allow workers to buy their own homes. The objections against the possibility that is given to workers to become small home owners, owners of the house or flat they live in, are not justified. The part of the Senate that I belong to has the most committed orientation in this regard.[67]

[64] PP, SR, Discussioni, afternoon session of 17 December 1948, p. 4624.

[65] Marialuisa-Lucia Sergio, *Le organizzazioni economiche e la società civile*, in Istituto Luigi Sturzo, *Fanfani e la casa*, cit., p. 57.

[66] PP, SR, Discussioni, afternoon session of 17 December 1948, pp. 4624-4625.

[67] PP, SR, Discussioni, afternoon session of 17 December 1948, p. 4638. The Christian Democrats' preference for ownership again emerged in a later session, when Fanfani and Adone Zoli raised the issue of dwellings that would be built by companies, and especially cooperatives, proposing an amendment — later approved by the House — that allowed the cooperatives to give all homes in ownership: PP, SR, Discussioni, afternoon session of 18 December 1948, pp. 4692-4718.

Finally, Rubinacci returned to the topic in the penultimate session of the debate in the House, using words that reveal how rental housing was basically seen as a last resource for those unable to meet the expenses involved in rent-to-own contracts. Recalling the bill's purpose, the Christian Democrat senator in fact stressed how it proposed

> on the one hand, to give workers the opportunity to acquire home ownership and, on the other hand, to reach out to less well-off workers, to workers with low wages who could therefore not aspire to home ownership. For them we have, in fact, arranged that half of the dwellings that will be built are to be rented out.[68]

The Tupini and Aldisio laws

Some months after the Ina Casa plan was approved, another very important measure for the residential construction sector was launched: Law 408 of 2 July 1949 on the increase in real estate development, better known as the Tupini law, after the name of the minister of Public Works who made the proposal.[69] The measure contained four parts. Title I allocated funds and laid down the rules for the construction of social housing, extending the number of entities eligible to take out loans for this purpose: these included, in particular, non-profit companies set up for the purpose of building social housing to be rented out with a future purchase agreement, thus confirming that these companies were treated in the same way as the social housing bodies provided for by the aforementioned Legislative Decree 1600/1947. Title II, instead, aimed at stimulating private construction through tax reliefs — in first instance, the 25-year exemption on property tax, but also other tax exemptions or reductions related to the purchase of buildable areas, construction works and sale deeds for all dwellings that could be qualified as non-luxury.[70] In subsequent years, these tax reliefs greatly impacted on the development of residential constructions and the spread of home ownership, encouraging builders and purchasers to do whatever necessary to bring expensive homes within the parameters of non-luxury housing.[71] Finally, title III regulated the expropriation

[68] PP, SR, Discussioni, session of 19 December 1948, p. 4738. Rumor reiterated the concept during the last discussion at the Chamber of Deputies: PP, CD, Discussioni, session of 17 February 1949, p. 6388.

[69] Law 408 of 2 July 1949, *Disposizioni per l'incremento delle costruzioni edilizie*, published in the Official Gazette on 18 July 1949.

[70] The characteristics of the luxury dwellings were subsequently outlined by the ministerial decree of 7 January 1950, published in the Official Gazette on 17 January.

[71] For two important Milanese examples see: Elena Demartini, *Pratiche abitative in una casa signorile ma "non di lusso"*, in F. De Pieri e al., *Storie di case*, cit., pp. 23-43; Michela Morgante, *Popolare di lusso. Restyling Montecatini in un isolato del centro storico*, ivi, pp. 211-231.

of land needed for the construction of social housing, whereas title IV set out some final provisions.

This bill, and others presented by Tupini shortly thereafter, absorbed the indications of a commission that the minister himself had set up in March 1948, with the aim of addressing the housing problem. The experts who were called to join the commission (politicians, specialists, government officials, managers of public and private entities)[72] were entrusted with the task of examining the problem in its multiple aspects and proposing measures to be taken to intensify reconstruction works and increase the production of residential construction, in order to meet the great housing need in the country. During the commission's first meeting, the DC's vice-secretary — the engineer Stanislao Ceschi — recalled that, although the war had worsened the housing problem, the latter had existed before. He furthermore noted an element "of particular importance": it would have been "appropriate to give everyone the possibility to become home owners, through a variety of rent-to-own agreements". In that same meeting, Ceschi's party member Carmine De Martino also asserted that "all citizens should own their home", stating that this represented a "social problem of great importance also for political purposes" — an observation that can in all probability be attributed to the desire for social stability and the aim of broadening the consensus.[73] In order to conduct its activities, the commission was divided into two sub-commissions: one aimed at addressing the housing issue from an urban planning perspective, the other focusing on its financial and social implications. One particularly interesting conclusion drawn by the second sub-commission was the recommendation to encourage both affordable and social housing agencies and private operators to rent out the constructed housing with future purchase agreements.[74]

The bill on the increase in real estate development was presented in the Chamber of Deputies in February 1949 and discussed in April. Article 3 envisaged that the social housing built by municipalities, the IACPs, the INCIS and other institutions could be rented out with a future purchase agreement upon authorisation of the Ministry of Public Works. The Christian Democrat MP Margherita Bontade presented an amendment aimed at making this option an obligation, thus forcing the involved institutions to transfer ownership of all the social housing they would have built. She explained that the main purpose of the amendment — other than to relieve the State from the burden of fixing the

[72] These included: a number of Christian Democrat MPs (Salvatore Aldisio, Stanislao Ceschi and Carmine De Martino); the INCIS commissioner Antonio Jannotta; the architect Pio Montesi; the urban planner Luigi Piccinato; the Governor of the Bank of Italy, Donato Menichella; and the director general of the SGI, Eugenio Gualdi.

[73] Ministero dei Lavori Pubblici, *Commissione per lo studio del problema della casa*, Rome, Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato, 1949, p. 8.

[74] Ministero dei Lavori Pubblici, *Commissione per lo studio del problema della casa*, cit., pp. 29-30.

institutions' budgets, which would have been deducted from the costs of maintaining and managing the built heritage — was to encourage citizens to save money and stimulate the spread of small home ownership:

> Renting homes with a future purchase agreement will allow many families who are not well off to become home owners. This will facilitate the formation of a widespread phenomenon of small home ownership, whose beneficial economic, *political* and social consequences are easy to imagine.[75]

At the end of her intervention, Bontade again underscored "the social, moral and economic advantage" of the proposed amendment and clarified the political goal of the increase in home owners: "By increasing small home ownership, we will obtain a more satisfied and, therefore, stable society."[76] Despite gaining the appreciation of Fernando Tambroni — the bill's rapporteur — and of the same Minister Tupini, who both acknowledged the importance of the amendment's social end goal, it was not accepted for technical reasons linked to the arrangement of mortgage loans by the institutions in question.[77]

Subsequently, Angelo Cemmi and other DC senators proposed a similar — albeit less radical — amendment in Senate, suggesting that not all homes but at least half of them would be allocated on a rent-to-own basis. In this case too, the proposed aims included the increase in small home ownership (listed first), "also within the spirit of the Constitution", as Cemmi himself observed.[78] Senator Antonio Toselli (DC), a rapporteur for the Public Works Commission, declared that the commission did not wish to make any objections to the amendment and deferred to the judgment of Minister Tupini. By contrast, the Socialist Giovanni Cosattini — while acknowledging that the amendment had a certain value — felt it was preferable not to place any constraints on the matter, leaving it to the minister to make the most appropriate decisions based on the circumstances. Tupini expressed his objection to the amendment precisely in view of Cosattini's considerations, which induced Cemmi to withdraw it.[79] Consequently, no prescriptions regarding the allocation of social housing on a rent-to-own basis were included in the law.

On a whole, the Socialists conveyed an attitude of prudent openness towards the bill, despite their reservations on the general approach and, especially, on the allocated funds, which they considered to be insufficient. The Communists, instead, expressed a decidedly negative judgement and invited Tupini to withdraw the bill. During the debate in the Chamber of Deputies, Pietro Amendola

[75] PP, CD, Discussioni, session of 8 April 1949, p. 7973. Italics are mine.
[76] PP, CD, Discussioni, session of 8 April 1949, p. 7973.
[77] PP, CD, Discussioni, session of 8 April 1949, pp. 7973-7974.
[78] PP, SR, Discussioni, session of 25 May 1949, p. 7757. Cemmi also noted that the Chamber had rejected Bontade's amendment by only three votes.
[79] PP, SR, Discussioni, session of 25 May 1949, p. 7758.

lamented the fact that the allocation of funds for social housing (title I) represented a step backwards from Sereni's decree of 1947.[80] With regard to the tax exemptions provided for in title II, in particular exemption from property tax, Amendola explained that the PCI was against it for several reasons, starting from the fact that its indiscriminate nature would have privileged large builders and owners "like Mr Bonomi in Milan, who owns hundreds of homes and does not pay a penny of tax, and like many black nobles in Rome, who hide behind the screen of real estate companies, and who do not pay a penny".[81] Lionello Matteucci (PSI) also criticised title II: he highlighted, among other things, that tax exemptions would have failed to attract private capital to the construction sector and alleviate the housing shortage if "a mass of citizens and workers" would not be put in a position to pay the required rents.[82]

Matteucci then presented, with Amendola and other Communist MPs, an amendment on the indivisible ownership cooperatives: those that, once the homes were built, would not have transferred ownership to individual members and that — in the words of one of the supporters of the amendment, Achille Stuani — were quite different from the "companies wishing to speculate". The amendment aimed at granting these cooperatives a further exemption regarding the general income tax on construction materials. However, Tambroni and Tupini declared that the Public Works Commission and the government were against the amendment, which was rejected.[83]

In the discussion in the Senate, Egisto Cappellini reiterated the PCI's clear opposition to the 25-year exemption from property tax, as this would have favoured "speculative constructions":

> speculators do not need an exemption from property tax to continue their business, that is, building speculative constructions. For when they charge the equivalent of 10 to 15 thousand lire per room per month, neither an employee of the State, the Senate or any other administration or company, nor a worker will manage to rent such housing, because none of these can afford the luxury of spending 70 to 80 thousand lire per month, which is what it would take to pay the apartment's rent. This type of speculation would continue anyway, because those who are able to pay 70 or 80 thousand lire per month can afford to pay a few thousand more, whereas social housing — I insist — should receive a special contribution from the State, but both types of construction must pay the State the amount it is entitled to claim.[84]

Intervening later on in the discussion, the Socialist Giacomo Mancini said that he regretted having to disagree with Cappellini's call to withdraw a bill that he felt was substantially appreciable, despite the "great flaw […] to allocate only 5

[80] PP, CD, Discussioni, morning session of 7 April 1949, pp. 7875-79. The Socialists also shared this critical observation: ivi, pp. 7885-88.

[81] PP, CD, Discussioni, morning session of 7 April 1949, pp. 7883-84: quote on p. 7884.

[82] PP, CD, Discussioni, morning session of 7 April 1949, p. 7888.

[83] PP, CD, Discussioni, session of 8 April 1949, pp. 7992-93.

[84] PP, SR, Discussioni, session of 24 May 1949, p. 7688.

billions, *rari nantes in gurgite vasto*", when a budget five times higher would have been necessary. Indeed, only thus would it have been possible to resolve "the distressing problem of the homeless and, consequently, of rents; for the more homes are on the market, the more rents go down. The law of supply always leaves its mark".[85]

After being approved in the Senate, the bill — subjected to a number of amendments — returned to the Chamber, where it was given the final go-ahead by an absolute majority. It is worth noting here that the left-wing MPs intervening both in the Senate (Cappellini and Mancini) and in the Chamber of Deputies (Amendola and Matteucci) based their assessments of the various points contained in the bill on the expectation that the homes would be rented, not allocated to owner-occupiers.[86]

A final important measure in the field of residential construction in the post-war period was the 1950 law that established the Fund for the Increase in Real Estate Development.[87] In order to "stimulate private construction activities, encouraging the initiative of small savers" (art. 1), the law — which took the name of Tupini's successor at the Ministry of Public Works, the Christian Democrat Salvatore Aldisio — focused on easy credit terms: individuals, cooperatives and consortia aiming to build a home for themselves or for their members, provided it was not a luxury home, were granted 35-year loans at a reduced rate of 4% per year to cover up to three quarters of the costs of the area and the construction. The resources required for the establishment of the Fund, which would have advanced the sums to the credit institutions called upon to grant the loans at such advantageous conditions, would have been taken out of the Lire Fund of the European Recovery Program. In this regard, it is worth stressing that the Aldisio law essentially incorporated the indications that representatives of the Italian government had received from the American officials in charge of managing the Marshall Plan funds. The latter had conveyed their doubts about the Ina Casa plan's reliance on the intervention of the State and bureaucratic bodies; in their opinion, the housing problem had to be addressed precisely through personal initiative and real estate credit.[88] Moreover, the law granted various tax reliefs for the dwellings to be built, mostly by also applying previous provisions of the Ina Casa plan and the Tupini law to these constructions.

[85] PP, SR, Discussioni, session of 24 May 1949, pp. 7696-97.

[86] PP, CD, Discussioni, session of 25 June 1949, p. 9658.

[87] Law 715 of 10 August 1950, *Costituzione di un "Fondo per l'incremento edilizio" destinato a sollecitare l'attività edilizia privata per la concessione di mutui per la costruzione di case di abitazione*, published in the Official Gazette n. 211 of 14 September 1950.

[88] Emanuele Bernardi, *Politiche per la casa e aiuti americani dall'Unrra al Piano Marshall (1944-1950)*, in Pier Luigi Ballini (ed.), *Quaderni Degasperiani per la storia dell'Italia contemporanea*, 1, Soveria Mannelli (CZ), Rubbettino, 2009, pp. 161-178.

The minister of Public Works sent the bill to the Senate in June 1950.[89] During the discussion, the Senator Vittorio Ghidetti (PCI) — a local councillor and president of the IACP of Treviso — expressed his satisfaction for the establishment of the Fund, which would "certainly have brought great benefits in the hard and vast field of housing shortage in Italy". However, he also stressed that its contribution would have been "only [a] modest [one] for the immense need for housing" in the country, for the solution of which "quite other, courageous measures" were required that the government would have to take "as quickly as possible".[90] Aldisio hoped that, once approved, the law would be "applied intelligently and conscientiously" so as to draw "the savings of the lower classes towards the building construction sector".[91] Among the "category of savers" who would have benefited from the measure, the rapporteur Luigi Borromeo (DC) included "artisans, modest professionals, small retailers in need of a home".[92] The Liberal Giuseppe Paratore declared himself a "fervent supporter of this law, […] the worthy achievement of Minister Aldisio", thanks to whom "tenants [could have] become owner-occupiers".[93] The discussion next focused on the possibility to exclude from the anticipated benefits anyone who already owned a dwelling suitable for the needs of a family, even if it was located in a different municipality than that of residence. Finally, an amendment proposed by a group of Communist senators guided by Giacomo Ferrari was approved, which suggested to enhance the commission responsible for the Fund's management with representatives of the cooperatives, which could have included "the smallest" among the "small savers" to which the law was directed.[94]

Unanimously approved in the Senate, the bill was sent to the Chamber on the eve of the Assembly's summer recess. It was, therefore, referred to the examination and approval by the VII Public Works Commission in legislative session.[95] The rapporteur of the measure was Caroniti (DC); as we have seen, in the discussion of the Ina Casa plan, Caroniti had — unsuccessfully — proposed an amendment aimed at broadening the range of those eligible to obtain housing in ownership. Referring to that proposal, Caroniti said he was pleased to see that Aldisio wanted to extend "to all small savers — from the worker to the peasant, from the artisan to the small retailer" that which Caroniti had, at the time, sought to obtain "for the good, provident savers belonging to the category of humble workers". Using the same paternalistic tone, he then pointed out that, through this bill, the State encouraged private enterprise to

[89] PP, SR, Discussioni, afternoon session of 14 June1950, p. 17324.
[90] PP, SR, Discussioni, morning session of 28 July 1950, p. 19034.
[91] PP, SR, Discussioni, morning session of 28 July 1950, pp. 19035-19036.
[92] PP, SR, Discussioni, morning session of 28 July 1950, p. 19039.
[93] PP, SR, Discussioni, morning session of 28 July 1950, p. 19047.
[94] PP, SR, Discussioni, morning session of 28 July 1950, p. 19057.
[95] PP, CD, Discussioni, afternoon session of 28 July 1950, p. 21789.

build "modest homes […] destined for the aforementioned humble savers" and paved the way "for the solution of the problem of social housing", stimulating people "to increase and, subsequently, invest their savings in the construction of their own little home".[96]

Matteucci (PSI) next took the floor, declaring that "the opposition [would] not [have]… opposed this bill" because it essentially went in the right direction, even if it was not free from defects, which is why he decided to abstain.[97] Pietro Amendola announced that the PCI would have voted in favour, although he urged the government to help — through other measures — "those categories that have no possibility of saving, namely the most humble layers of the population, those who live in caves and shacks".[98] In his reply to the exponents of the Left, Aldisio stressed the fact that his bill was but the first step in the direction of a solution to the housing problem, urging them not to underestimate "a psychological element" that they should "respect and appreciate", namely the widespread desire for new, modern and comfortable homes. In fact, notwithstanding the shortage of housing due to the destruction of war and the prolonged stagnation of the construction sector, he explained, "people, today, no longer want to live in old homes; people want to live in healthier, more comfortable environments".[99] Towards the end of the discussion, the Communist MP Stuani again stressed — even if shyly — the limited scope of the law, from which only those in a position to "bear the burden" of the loan could have benefited.[100] The measure was then put to the vote by secret ballot and approved by a large majority, with two abstentions (Matteucci and fellow party member Mancini) and two votes against, among a total of 38 voters.

Conclusion

The strong increase in home ownership to its current high levels has deeply marked the history of contemporary Italy. It mainly involved urban areas and the vast social group of the middle classes, though without excluding working classes. Wide access to home ownership occurred in different ways

[96] PP, CD, Commissioni in sede legislativa, VII commissione - session of 29 July 1950, p. 320.

[97] PP, CD, Commissioni in sede legislativa, VII commissione - session of 29 July 1950, p. 321. Pointing out that the 4 per cent interest rate on mortgages was "only written on paper" and that it would actually be higher, Matteucci did not fail to specify that a "colleague" had brought to his attention that "in Hungary, for example, no interest is paid at all".

[98] PP, CD, Commissioni in sede legislativa, VII commissione - session of 29 July 1950, p. 321.

[99] PP, CD, Commissioni in sede legislativa, VII commissione - session of 29 July 1950, p. 322.

[100] PP, CD, Commissioni in sede legislativa, VII commissione - session of 29 July 1950, p. 326. Stuani again pointed out that the interest rate on mortgages would in fact have turned out to be much higher than the anticipated 4 per cent, but when Tupini reassured him on the matter he declared that he would withdraw his observation.

and through multiple channels: not only self-building and the private sector construction industry — mainly aimed at building homes to be given in ownership — contributed to its growth, but also divisible ownership cooperatives, whose buildings subsequently became none other than ordinary apartment blocks with privately owned flats, as well as subsidised housing, as a result of the allocation of affordable and social housing on a rent-to-own basis and, next, the sale to the beneficiaries of part of the initially rented homes.[101]

In the social sciences, which have given far more attention to this theme as opposed to the field of historiography, it has often been stressed that the growth of home ownership has largely been the result of "non-policies" and/or ineffective policies: for example, the widespread tolerance of unauthorised building, the lack of adequate incentives for private renting, and the limited budget made available for rented social housing.[102] However, in addition to these factors, which can be attributed to omissions or indeed ineffective measures, I believe that this phenomenon was mainly fuelled by public policies that were deliberately designed to encourage and support small home ownership. As a matter of fact, ever since the early twentieth century, housing policies in Italy — starting with legislation on affordable and social housing — have been directed not only towards social renting and low-income groups, but to a large extent also towards ownership and the middle layers of the population. In this regard, the elements of continuity between the liberal age, Fascism and the Republic are of particular relevance.[103]

[101] In Turin, for example, more than half of the dwellings built with public funds between 1945 and 1977 were given in ownership: Daniela Adorni, Maria D'Amuri, Davide Tabor, *La casa pubblica. Storia dell'Istituto autonomo case popolari di Torino*, Rome, Viella, 2017, pp. 170 ff.

[102] See, for example, F. Bernardi, T. Poggio, *Home ownership and social inequality in Italy*, cit., pp. 192-96; T. Poggio, *Proprietà della casa, disuguaglianze sociali e vincoli del sistema abitativo*, cit., p. 35; M. Filandri, *Proprietari a tutti i costi*, cit., p. 110.

[103] M. Baldini, *La casa degli italiani*, cit., pp. 152-56; A.R. Minelli, *La politica per la casa*, cit., pp. 112-13; T. Poggio, *The Housing Pillar of the Mediterranean welfare regime*, cit.; A. Tosi, *La politica della casa*, cit., pp. 239-43. The preference for ownership obtained via the rent-to-own method has been a common feature of legislation ever since Law 254 of 31 May 1903, on social housing; its promoter, Luigi Luzzatti, considered the beneficiaries — industrial workers, artisans, direct cultivators, white-collar workers and "workers of thought", such as teachers or journalists — as a group of "faithful conservators of the social order" (Maria D'Amuri, *La casa per tutti nell'Italia giolittiana. Provvedimenti e iniziative per la municipalizzazione dell'edilizia popolare*, Milan, Ledizioni, 2013, pp. 67-78). On the interwar years, see Mariuccia Salvati, *L'inutile salotto. L'abitazione piccolo-borghese nell'Italia fascista*, Turin, Bollati Boringhieri, 1993, pp. 76-95; Francesco Bartolini, *Roma borghese. La casa e i ceti medi tra le due guerre*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 2001, pp. 3-75. An in-depth analysis of the elements of continuity between the Fascist era and the years of Centrism and the first centre-left governments can be found in Lando Bortolotti, *Storia della politica edilizia in Italia. Proprietà, imprese edili e lavori pubblici dal primo dopoguerra ad oggi (1919-1970)*, Rome, Editori Riuniti, 1978. What is lacking — and would be very useful — is a long-term analysis of the discursive and ideological construction, by individuals and political forces in favour of home ownership, of a virtuous class of small savers to be protected and rewarded for being the backbone of society.

This article has shown how the theme of home ownership entered the political and legislative sphere in the post-war period, when some of the main pieces were laid down that would make up — in the following decades — the mosaic of a country of real estate owners. The discussions on housing matters that took place within the Constituent Assembly were translated into a single explicit reference in the Constitution: the second clause of Article 47, which was included after a proposal by the DC that called for the Republic to support the investment of people's savings in small home ownership. Thanks to the Legislative Decree 1600/1947, promulgated by the first government from which left-wing parties had been excluded, the generous state subsidies previously reserved for affordable and social housing organisations were also made available to housing cooperatives as well as to non-profit private companies established to build rent-to-own social housing. Next, the Ina Casa plan also contributed significantly to the spread of home ownership, despite the fact that, throughout the parliamentary discussions, the left-wing parties — in defending the interests of low-wage workers and the necessity to avoid limiting the benefits of housing allocation to the first beneficiaries- obtained a significant reduction in the proportion of housing to be assigned on a rent-to-own basis compared to that anticipated by Fanfani's bill. The process of placing the above-mentioned cooperatives and private companies on the same level as the social housing bodies was consolidated and further developed by the Tupini law, which changed the funding system for social housing and granted substantial tax benefits for the construction and sale of all non-luxury homes. Finally, the Aldisio law allowed for a wide range of savers — both individuals and cooperatives or consortia — to take out loans on very advantageous terms to have their homes built.

The DC made considerable efforts to promote the spread of home ownership. In a political and cultural context that was characterised "by a strong reassertion of family values",[104] home ownership fitted with a political programme that considered decent, comfortable and adequate (in relation to the number of inhabitants) housing an essential requirement for supporting the family and protecting it from the pitfalls of "promiscuous" living conditions. Moreover, small home ownership represented, in the eyes of the Christian Democrats, a decisive factor in terms of emancipation, sense of responsibility and social stabilisation, towards which it seemed appropriate to direct the virtuous practice of private saving. This policy aimed primarily at the middle classes, which on the one hand had the economic resources to become home owners, including via fiscal and credit benefits; on the other hand, they formed the backbone of the broad interclass consensus that De Gasperi's party managed to obtain. As Vittorio Vidotto highlighted about Rome, "home owner-

[104] Pietro Scoppola, *La repubblica dei partiti. Evoluzione e crisi di un sistema politico, 1945-1996*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1997, p. 82.

ship for the small- and middle-class population was an unquestionable principle for the vast majority of Christian Democrats as well as a powerful consensus builder".[105] Furthermore, Piero Craveri observed that, for public and parapublic employees, home purchase benefits could compensate for the "limited perspectives in terms of salary growth" linked to the rigorous approach to the management of the public budget.[106] Speaking from a more critical stance, Lando Bortolotti saw "a purely political reason […] behind the push for home ownership", since "the same people who pay urban land rent through rents, tone down or stop protesting" when, with the prospect of becoming owners, "they pay (but this time without reacting) the same rent, in mortgage payments".[107] What is certain is that the DC and the other forces of the centrist coalition were far more unanimous in their support of the measures in favour of small home ownership than they were with regard to coeval land reform projects aimed at extending farm ownership through land redistribution measures; precisely because of their redistributive character, which distinguished them from the housing measures under examination here, these measures were unpopular among the Liberals and portions of the Christian Democrat right that represented the interests of the large landowners who were threatened by expropriation.[108]

The Communists and Socialists failed to counter the Christian Democrats' solutions with a specific programme that was equally structured in ideological terms. Overall, the housing issue was less prominent in the Left's policy formulations and proposals, which rather generically called for a right to housing for all, to be achieved through a more decisive reconstruction effort, the relaunch of housing (especially social housing) and the containment of rental prices. The preference for rent, or indivisible ownership for cooperatives, as opposed to individual private ownership — the traditional heritage of Marxism and the workers' movement — was reproposed only partially or unmethodically.[109] Only few MPs took a clear stance, mainly on public

[105] Vittorio Vidotto, *Roma contemporanea*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 2006, p. 288.

[106] Piero Craveri, *L'arte del non governo. L'inesorabile declino della Repubblica italiana*, Venice, Marsilio, 2016, p. 78.

[107] L. Bortolotti, *Storia della politica edilizia in Italia*, cit., p. 222.

[108] See Gino Massullo, *La riforma agraria*, in Piero Bevilacqua (ed.), *Storia dell'agricoltura italiana in età contemporanea*, vol. III, *Mercati e istituzioni*, Venice, Marsilio, 1991, pp. 509-542, in particular pp. 522-523; Emanuele Bernardi, *La riforma agraria e l'Italia democristiana*, in Agostino Giovagnoli (ed.), *L'Italia e gli italiani dal 1948 al 1978*, Soveria Mannelli, Rubbettino, 2019, pp. 61-80, in particular pp. 66-69; Emanuele Bernardi, *I liberali e la riforma agraria (1947-1950)*, in Fabio Grassi Orsini, Gerardo Nicolosi (eds.), *I liberali italiani dall'antifascismo alla Repubblica, vol. I*, Soveria Mannelli, Rubbettino, 2008, pp. 419-440, in particular pp. 420-427.

[109] After all, if we broaden our perspective, we can note that, in the twentieth century, many Western social democratic parties reassessed private home ownership, after it had initially been rejected as a cause of working-class embourgeoisement: Karin Kurz, Hans-Peter Blossfeld,

housing. In the parliamentary debate, the Communists and Socialists tried to check the more radical proposals by the DC with the aim of protecting the interests of the working classes, opposing measures that would penalise the latter and/or excessively benefit the middle and upper classes. Nevertheless, it is difficult to disagree with those who argue that the left-wing parties "failed to develop an alternative housing policy to that of the Christian Democrats",[110] which — as we have seen — attributed a strong social and moral value to small home ownership and ideally aimed to extend it to the whole of the Italian population. In fact, this aim would be largely achieved in the following decades.

Introduction: Social Stratification, Welfare Regimes, and Access to Home Ownership, in Idd. (eds.), *Home Ownership and Social Inequality in Comparative Perspective*, cit., pp. 10-11.

[110] Giorgio Rochat, Gaetano Sateriale, Lidia Spano, *Introduzione*, in Idd. (eds.), *La casa in Italia 1945-1980. Alle radici del potere democristiano*, Bologna, Zanichelli, 1980, p. 14.

About Fiume

Giuseppe Civile*

This article analyses a selection of recent studies about the political life of Fiume between 1919 and 1920, most of which were published on the occasion of the centenary of Gabriele D'Annunzio's march on the city. The examined texts offer a re-reading of different themes: the city's pre-war history, the role of the army, the city's relation with post-war Italy and Fascism, the interpretation of new theories and political practices, and D'Annunzio's influence on individual and collective actors. Taken together, these recent studies demonstrate that the debate on Fiume is still alive and open to new interpretations, in terms of both specific themes and more general interpretations.
Key words: First post-war period, Italy 1918-1921, The Fiume crisis, Gabriele D'Annunzio

It is well known that, from September 1919 and throughout 1920, Fiume attracted general attention both in Italy and internationally. In terms of historical reflections (but not only), this attention can be said to have continued throughout the following century.

Many scholars have considered the case of Fiume evidence of a situation that was common to a large part of Europe in the first post-war period: social and political disorder, co-existence and overlapping of radical and opposing cultural and ideological positions, and a tendency towards direct and violent action. A good, recent example is the work of Robert Gerwarth.[1] Others have described Fiume as a laboratory, circumscribed in space and time, in which the themes and practices of the new politics that would mark the first half of the twentieth century were tested.[2] Whether the emphasis is placed on the immediate post-war period or the forthcoming advent of totalitarianism, these

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[1] Robert Gerwarth, *La rabbia dei vinti*, *1917-1923*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 2019 (first edition 2016).

[2] See, among others, Mark Mazower, *Le ombre d'Europa. Democrazie e totalitarismi nel XX secolo*, Milan, Garzanti, 2000 (first edition 1999); Adam J. Tooze, *The Deluge: The Great War, America and the Remaking of the Global Order, 1916-1931*, New York, Viking Adult, 2014.

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studies give the Fiume episode a relevant position in the continental context of a process that we could define — borrowing Charles Maier's expression — as the recasting of bourgeois Europe,[3] leaving the connection with Italian history in the background.

Dominique Kirchner Reill proposed yet another perspective in a recent monograph dedicated to Fiume.[4] Reill evokes a typology consisting of more or less vast communities that had remained orphans after the waning of empires (the Austro-Hungarian one in particular); the theme of the book is their effort to keep alive the rules and practices that once guaranteed their existence. In other words, continuity versus change; in this sense, Fiume — from the end of the war and until it was swallowed up by the Fascist regime — offers a good example of the defence of continuity, which the author analyses by exploring unfamiliar yet interesting paths, such as the school system and monetary circulation. Obscured by nationalist and Dannunzian rhetoric, the city's pragmatic choice — made by an elite that expressed itself above all in the National Council — was to opt for Italy as the best solution towards maintaining a protected autonomy. This explains the consensus for D'Annunzio's enterprise, the generally quiet co-existence with the legionnaires, the tolerance towards a regime that was radical in words more than anything else and governed by a Vate ("prophet") who, "for fifteen months without doing much else", dedicated his time to reciting from a balcony.[5] Finally, Reill draws attention to a neglected but central theme: the living conditions of the Fiuman population and, starting from these, the material and cultural reasons behind its confrontation — moving from consensus to conflict — with the Dannunzian experience. Viewed from a different perspective, this approach takes nothing away from the political and ideological importance of the Fiuman experiment.

The historiography on Italy, which is the exclusive focus of the sample of texts examined below, has obviously taken a different direction. Squeezed between two decisive phases of national history, the Great War and Fascism, from the beginning the Fiume affair — an exemplary even if not a typical case of that crucial conjuncture — has been the object of particular attention that has never failed over time, as the over two hundred titles listed in the bibliography of a recent publication demonstrate.[6]

Broadly speaking, it can be said that post-war research initially concentrated its efforts on a strictly political analysis before it gave the event a more specific

[3] Charles Maier, *La rifondazione dell'Europa borghese*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1979 (first edition 1975).

[4] Dominique Kirchner Reill, *The Fiume Crisis. Life in the Wake of the Habsburg Empire*, Cambridge, Massachusetts; London, England, Harvard University Press, 2020.

[5] D.K. Reill, *The Fiume Crisis*, cit. p. 68.

[6] Mimmo Franzinelli, Paolo Cavassini, *Fiume. Un racconto per immagini dell'impresa di D'Annunzio*, Gorizia, LEG Edizioni, 2019.

position within the Italian general framework.[7] In a second phase, scholars such as Mosse, De Felice and Leeden examined the events of Fiume in relation to the cultural and social drives and suggestions that marked this specific phase, broadening and developing the overall picture.[8] At the same time, scholars undertook an internal analysis of the movement's various contrasting components and different phases. This opened up more wide-ranging research perspectives that paved the way for Emilio Gentile's comprehensive reinterpretation, on the one hand, and highly distinct analyses such as that offered by Claudia Salaris, on the other.[9]

It was therefore to be expected that the hundredth anniversary would give rise to commemorations and polemics but also to new historiographical reflections.[10] Not surprisingly, the first publications often focused on a discussion of the post-war period, from Fascism to the second post-war years; more recent contributions, instead, seem to confirm that the subject has not yet been fully explored. It is also worth noting how, a hundred years later, new documentary and biographical evidence still emerged, even quite frequently; this confirms — among other things — that the decision to participate in that adventure was largely connected to the prospect of turning it into a story that was memorable for all.[11] This relevance often seemed to be announced and guaranteed by the highly common recurrence — in the book titles — of the expression "with D'Annunzio", which ends up referring to what still seems to be a widespread common sense: the fact that the Commander can represent all aspects of the Fiume affair.

For a long time now, historians have acknowledged that D'Annunzio's strategic role in the Fiume enterprise must be positioned within a network of relationships with other important players, both at an individual and a collective level. Likewise, a multitude of threads link the Dannunzian image of the city, alone and "holocausted" against the world, to an "outside" that is both Italian

[7] Paolo Alatri, *Nitti, D'Annunzio e la questione adriatica,* Milan, Feltrinelli, 1959; Roberto Vivarelli, *Storia delle origini del fascismo, vol. I*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1967.

[8] George Mosse, *Il poeta e l'esercizio del potere politico*, in George Mosse, *L'uomo e le masse nelle ideologie nazionaliste*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 1982, cit. pp. 97-115 (first edition 1973); Renzo De Felice, *D'Annunzio politico*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 1978; Michael. A. Ledeen, *D'Annunzio a Fiume*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 1975. At least in the case of Mosse and De Felice, these indications are purely illustrative compared to the wealth of suggestions that their entire production also offers with respect to the Fiume case.

[9] Emilio Gentile, *Il mito dello Stato nuovo dall'antigiolittismo al fascismo*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 1982; Emilio Gentile, *Le origini dell'ideologia fascista*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1996; Claudia Salaris, *Alla festa della rivoluzione. Artisti e libertari con D'Annunzio a Fiume*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2002. The observation made in the previous note also applies to Gentile.

[10] See, for example, the report by Raffaele Oriani: *Ricordare Fiume: un'impresa*, in "Venerdì di Repubblica" of 6 September 2019.

[11] See, among others, Haruchi Shimoi, *Un samurai a Fiume,* edited by G.A. Pautasso, Sesto San Giovanni, Oaks Editrice, 2019, and Giovanna Latour, Filippo Sallusto, *1920-21. Diario fiumano: dalle carte di Luigi De Michelis*, Rome, Ricciardi e Associati, 2019.

and European. Nonetheless, the recourse to images from D'Annunzio's narrative also permeates those analytical studies that — given their analytical precision — have nothing to do with it. Looking at our sample, this is the case of Pupo, Serventi Longhi and Guerri. It is as if they fail to escape the rhetorical perimeter traced by the Commander, which furthermore contains highly appealing hints and suggestions.

A few other, general impressions merit attention. First, the persistent tendency to trace in Fiume the upcoming Fascist era rather than the imprint of the Great War that had just ended; second, the frequent yet methodologically indeterminate use of the term "revolution", which seems to raise more problems than it solves; third, the more or less explicit and justified comparisons with other episodes in contemporary history, above all the events of 1968 and beyond; lastly, and marginally, the recourse to present-day terminologies or situations that could help explain the case and probably also appeal to an audience of non-experts. Without going into detail here and saving some of my considerations for later, I would like to point out the risk — common to more or less all these tendencies — of decontextualising the analysis as well as the reader's perception.

In this article, I will try to make some less general observations on a group of recently published works.[12] While this, too, is a reductive choice, I nevertheless consider it useful because of the variety and clarity of the chosen analytical and interpretative approaches, and because — at a glance — interconnections and possible reciprocal cross-references clearly emerge despite the differences, thus confirming the density of the case under examination. In my opinion, their juxtaposition also testifies to the fact that the discussion among historians is still open on various fronts, and that much room for reflection remains for those who take an interest in the Fiume affair.

I have chosen to discuss the following publications: Raul Pupo, *Fiume città di passione* (Fiume city of passion), Rome-Bari, Laterza, 2018; Marco Mondini, *Fiume 1919. Una guerra civile italiana* (Fiume 1919. An Italian civil war), Salerno, Rome, 2019; Lucio Villari, *La luna di Fiume. 1919: il complotto* (The moon over Fiume. 1919: the conspiracy), Milan, Guanda, 2019; Enrico Serventi Longhi, *Il faro del mondo nuovo. D'Annunzio e i legionari a Fiume tra guerra e rivoluzione* (The lighthouse of the new world. D'Annunzio and the legionnaires of Fiume between war and revolution), Udine, Gaspari, 2019; Claudia Salaris, *Alla festa della rivoluzione. Artisti e libertari con D'Annunzio a Fiume* (At the revolution party. Artists and libertarians with D'Annunzio in

[12] These include: Giordano Bruno Guerri (ed.), *Fiume 1919-2019. Un centenario europeo tra identità, memorie e prospettive di ricerca,* Gardone Riviera, Silvana, 2020; Federico Carlo Simonelli, *D'Annunzio e il mito di Fiume*, Pisa, Pacini, 2021; and the useful review by Federico Carlo Simonelli, *Fiume e D'Annunzio. I cento anni di un caso storiografico ancora aperto*, in "Storicamente", n. 15-16, 2019-20, cit. pp.1-17.

Fiume), Bologna, Il Mulino, 2002-2019; and Giordano Bruno Guerri, *Disobbedisco. Cinquecento giorni di rivoluzione. Fiume 2019-2020* (I disobey. Fifty days of revolution. Fiume 2019-2020), Milan, Mondadori, 2019. Although Salaris's work actually dates back to 2002, the combination of the themes of culture and "celebration" still makes it a point of reference in this field, in that it promotes a non-superficial analysis of some of the most misused aspects of the Fiume affair. In fact, the book was republished on the occasion of the centenary and enriched by an essay on *D'Annunzio e le avanguardie* (D'Annunzio and the avant-gardes), a useful contribution that marks the distance — even in the mid-twentieth century — between D'Annunzio and futurism and, accordingly, the partiality of the futurist imprint on the Fiume experience that is examined in the text.

Before and after

Raul Pupo's *Fiume città di passione* not only deals with the events of 1919 and 1920 but also offers a synthesis of the city's history in contemporary times, from the eighteenth century to its conversion into Rijeka in the second post-war period.

Two chapters out of a total of six (namely the second and third chapter) are dedicated to the events under examination here. The centrality of D'Annunzio is nevertheless confirmed not only by the choice of title, but also by the brief introductory prologue, which is entirely dedicated to the events of Fiume and their relationship with the contemporary Italian situation. This peculiar beginning leaves in the background the assumption that the specific case can be better clarified by broadening the perspective — in a diachronic sense — to the Fiume context.

Pupo's book is an important contribution: the presentation is perspicuous yet engaging, the contextualisation of the local event in the Italian and European framework clear and effective. Additionally, this approach forces readers to redirect their attention, first of all by reversing the usual connection between Fiume and D'Annunzio. The city is no longer a part of D'Annunzio's trajectory; instead, the Commander's presence and action become part of a broader affair that affects all citizens.

The broader chronological perspective also enables the author to highlight the endogenous factors that contributed to the crisis of 1919. What undermined the foundations of Fiume's development (i.e. its ethnic and cultural hybridism, the protected autonomy within the Empire, economic integration with a vast hinterland) was first and foremost the growth of the aggressive nationalisms of the late nineteenth century, which turned traditional autonomist positions against Italy and generated a younger and more enterprising irredentism. The war permanently cancelled those foundations, while the complete uncertainty

of the future — worsened by the short-sighted and approximate management of the territory by the victorious powers — made Fiume the anything-but-passive object of manoeuvres implemented from above. This helps to explain the welcome given to D'Annunzio and, at the same time, the fact that local autonomists and irredentists were — especially through the National Council — among the important actors in Fiume with whom the Commander constantly had to deal.

The rest of the reconstruction up to the second post-war period makes it possible to place the authentic passion of Fiume — its true and final sacrifice — not in the Bloody Christmas of 1920 but in the events leading to the final demise of the Italian community, of which D'Annunzio's intervention was in some ways the prologue. If in the transition from Fiume to Rijeka the continuity of the *urbs* is maintained, as the author puts it, the *civitas* experiences a radical and irreversible caesura.[13]

At the centre of this extensive reconstruction, Pupo offers concise description of the two-year period of 1919-1920, which he simultaneously discusses on the local and national level. This leads him to consider Fiume a "compulsory point of compression" of the radical and polarised politicisation of the post-war period.[14] In his analysis of the Dannunzian period, Pupo gives due consideration to the role of the army, the Commander's personal cult — celebrated not only by the legionnaires — and the impossibility of making him a mere pawn in the designs of others. The reference to the continuity of certain aspects of the story with the "Radiant May", not uncommon in existing literature, perhaps underestimates the effects of the war that — in my opinion — seem to clearly distinguish the two events. In turn, the repeated recourse to the concept of "low-intensity civil war" reflects a more precise theme that also emerges in Mondini's theses discussed further ahead.

What I consider more problematic is the author's choice of treating separately, in distant paragraphs, the theme of the cultural dimension of "Fiumanism" and that of celebration, an evident stigma whose political significance Pupo does not fail to point out.[15] Such choice may not facilitate the understanding of both aspects and, in particular, their evident intertwining, as Salaris's work convincingly demonstrates.

In conclusion, a clear judgement of the whole enterprise and its theatrical nature can be traced in a comment on the abandonment of the city after the Bloody Christmas: "[T]he protagonists are saved and the chorus, made up of simple soldiers, legionnaires and citizens, dies."[16] Another, not necessarily

[13] Raul Pupo, *Fiume città di passione,* Rome-Bari, Laterza, 2018. The discussion of Fiume as a specific case of the "killing of [twentieth-century] cities" opens the conclusion, starting on p. 284.

[14] R. Pupo, *Fiume città di passione*, cit. p. 90.

[15] R. Pupo, *Fiume città di passione*, cit. p. 108.

[16] Marco Mondini, *Fiume 1919. Una guerra civile italiana,* Salerno, Rome, 2019, cit. p. 146.

opposite, consideration is included in the book's closing pages: the fact that, between 1919 and 1920, Fiume was "one of the possible other places of twentieth-century restlessness […] becoming a political fact and almost a state […] in the spotlight of the entire continent".[17] This quote is evidence of both the passion and balance that characterise Pupo's work.

A media invention

The second book that I wish to examine here is *Fiume 1919. Una guerra civile italiana* by Marco Mondini, which builds on a series of theses, as the author explains in the introduction. Fiume is nothing but "a media invention", "a propagandistic stroke of genius",[18] and "a huge misunderstanding",[19] as can be deduced from the way the issue manifests itself. There was no trace of it in Italy, either in the pre-war period or during the war itself: the name of the city never even appeared in the Treaty of London. It was only after the war that Fiume suddenly became the symbol of the mutilated victory, to the extent that it conditioned the entire peace negotiations and gave rise to D'Annunzio's "media masterpiece", "the first example of great national fake news".[20] Mondini states that the main aim of his book is to explain how this happened.

A reading of this kind is by no means excessive, as fake news can have serious consequences. Indeed, the Fiume affair was "Pandora's box of post-war Italy",[21] "the stage for a new civil war: it was only the first act, but few realised it".[22] The fact that the civil war and 1919 are mentioned in the title seems to suggest that the author considered these crucial to the whole affair.

Leaving aside catchy and timely expressions,[23] Mondini's theses deserve a few comments at the outset. The strongly propagandistic nature of the Fiume enterprise must at least be combined with two factors that are, in fact, present in the text itself. The first concerns the highly unstable situation in that area in the post-war period, which gave rise — as Pupo well recounts — to tensions and clashes to which the Fiume enterprise in some way responded; the second, on a more general level, lies in the double value that Fiume assumed precisely as a consequence of the war's outcome, not only in symbolic terms. If in the Europe of the Treaty of London its situation may have seemed irrelevant, in the immediate post-war period it quickly became the banner of unrecognised irre-

[17] M. Mondini, *Fiume 1919*, cit. p. 291.
[18] M. Mondini, *Fiume 1919*, cit. p. 8.
[19] M. Mondini, *Fiume 1919*, cit. p. 9.
[20] M. Mondini, *Fiume 1919*, cit. p. 12.
[21] M. Mondini, *Fiume 1919,* cit. p. 12.
[22] M. Mondini, *Fiume 1919*, p. 13.
[23] On the issue of the mutilated victory, see also Mondini, *Fiume 1919*, cit. p. 11: "[I]t cannot be said that the 1919 version of the 'it's all Europe's fault' formula did not work."

dentism, but also a gateway to the Balkan area that had become targetable as a hegemony — an aspect that did not escape the curious attention of France. While the confused and short-sighted mixture of irredentism and imperialism that obstructed the Italian delegation at Versailles beyond measure made it difficult to defend the Treaty of London, at the same time it revealed what appeared to be an unforeseen opportunity, though one consistent with Italian aspirations, thus fuelling the media invention.

As for the idea that Fiume was the "first act" of the subsequent civil war, hence in close continuity with it, viewed from a different perspective one could say that it was the Great War — in Italy as in Europe — that opened Pandora's box, which had been full at least from the late nineteenth century onwards. It is clearly debatable whether the Fiume affair was a real civil war or rather a peripheral military coup and, at least in the beginning, consistent — albeit in a subversive way — with the still prevalent general approach of the Italian parliament. What is certain is that a civil war of a very different nature would soon strike the heart of the country, partly feeding on the same moods circulating in Fiume but taking on a substantially different character, as Mondini himself observes.

The author's approach naturally focuses on the genesis and external impact of the enterprise, rather than on the incidents that occurred during D'Annunzio's 15-month rule over the city, which are somewhat pushed to the background. Above all, what happened in 1920 — after the failure of any compromises and with the downward spiral of "Fiumanism" — remains at the margins and is concentrated in summary evaluations: D'Annunzio's army is described as "a kind of circus", the general climate as a "disorderly holiday",[24] whereas the occupants are presented as "a bizarre community of rebels, artists, idealists, idlers and fanatics".[25] It is a fact that, as time went by, the political viability of the enterprise — from a national perspective — appeared to be growing ever weaker, while internal conflicts and contradictions within the peninsula prevailed more clearly over the ideologisation of foreign policy.

Naturally, this does not diminish Fiume's appeal, sustained from the very beginning by the press and by a widespread consensus in public opinion, although Mondini's work dedicates less space to these issues than one might expect, despite being based on a broad range of existing scholarship. Yet, even here, the new weight and different quality that the war gave to both of these factors emerge, as does the extreme difficulty of the traditional ruling class to understand the new situation and intervene successfully. In this context, the author considers D'Annunzio's choice a stroke of media genius, since it concerns a public figure capable of perfectly linking the before and after of the war.

[24] M. Mondini, *Fiume 1919*, cit. p. 82.
[25] M. Mondini, *Fiume 1919*, cit. p. 11.

However, there is another theme, perhaps less explicit in the book's title and introduction, that is highly interesting and prominent in Mondini's book: the close relationship between the specific event and the overall transformation of the army following the war. Thus, the military leadership acquired an extraordinary power, tenaciously defending it after peace was made, which manifested itself in the establishment of different — and, also for this reason, charged with unprecedented political significance — positions. In this sense, Fiume can be said to be a real litmus test: ranging from Caviglia's traditionally and rigidly loyalist army to Ceccherini's overtly insubordinate one, from Badoglio's tolerant and compromising one to the open support that Admiral Millo — at the head of the army itself — offered to D'Annunzio.

As is well known, this situation was accompanied by the disproportionate growth of the base, fuelled by ever younger recruits with ever less military experience. This phenomenon also had a precise impact on Fiume. In fact, where the greatest contribution to the Ronchi expedition came from Fiume, but not only. As Mondini makes clear, the subsequent constant influx of volunteers continues to be motivated also by the relationship with the conflict that had just ended. People were looking for the continuation of a poorly concluded experience, the completion of a too superficial and fleeting experience or the presumed achievement of something that was only imagined and desired. Consequently, different experiences and motivations created evident asymmetries even among young people of practically the same age, as in the exemplary case of Giovanni Comisso and Guido Keller. The author's analysis ends at this limit, which simultaneously separates and connects the political side and the cultural and existential side of the relationship with the war. This point deserves to be developed further, perhaps in a more detailed study of the situation in Fiume between 1919 and 1920.

I dare, but I scheme

The conspiracy theory that Pupo considers historiographically weak,[26] while Mondini calls it a rumour,[27] is at the heart of Lucio Villari's *La luna di Fiume. 1919: il complotto*. Here, too, we are dealing with a work that develops various theses, to which the author has added a good dose of controversy.

Villari's discussion revolves around two points. The first is that Fiume was, indeed, the central element of a vast conspiracy — which the press had already denounced at the time, though without obtaining any concrete results — aimed at destroying the liberal state in Italy, with the replacement of Victor Emmanuel III on the throne by the Duke of Aosta and, if necessary, the assassina-

[26] M. Mondini, *Fiume 1919*, cit., pp. 80-81.
[27] M. Mondini, *Fiume 1919*, cit., p. 63.

tion of Nitti. The second is to affirm, contrary to widespread underestimation, the political value — or rather, disvalue — of the actions of D'Annunzio, who was fully co-responsible for a plan that nevertheless constitutes one of the periodic revivals of a subversive "deep right" that runs through the entire history of united Italy.[28] The book also has a particular feature: the second part, which makes up almost half of the volume, contains unpublished documents that, in the author's opinion, substantially reinforce the theses presented in the first part.

Since the aim of Villari's work is to unveil the hidden face of the moon over Fiume, that is, the subversive plot in which it was embedded, the city's appearance in broad daylight (i.e. from September 1919 and throughout 1920) is somehow taken for granted or pushed to the background, as Mondini does for different reasons.

The author is perfectly aware of the circumstantial nature of his reconstruction. Nevertheless, drawing on a wealth of facts and considerations, he confirms that D'Annunzio and Fiume were part of a very wide network of interests, complicity, indulgences, temptations and diverse projects, none of which led to concrete results. What is missing, even if the reader may not feel the pressing need for it, is proof of a precise and coherent plan that rises above this magma. Moreover, such a plan seems very difficult to put together in the acute social and political confusion of the immediate post-war period.

It is evident that D'Annunzio, on his way to Fiume and even before, both dared and schemed, to turn the brilliant formula with which he dismissed the charges of conspiracy upside down. What is more difficult is to imagine the city as a credible base for national subversion. In this regard, Oscar Sinigaglia's account — reproduced in Villari's book — is perhaps even more interesting than certain important events, such as the elections of November 1919 or the marginalisation from Fiume of a conspirator par excellence such as Giovanni Giuriati. In October, even before the events in question happened and the advent of "Fiumanism", Sinigaglia went to the city to meet the Commander. The observations he wrote in his diary were disheartening: a coming and going of all kinds of people, many of whom spies; a *Comando*, the highest seat of power, where everyone talks too much and about too many things; and the absolute need to purge "boys and madmen" who compromise the image of Fiume and D'Annunzio himself.[29] Viewed from this perspective, it is perhaps too much to call the fact that Fiume failed to become a subversive base a mystery.

This in no way disproves the existence of the "deep right" but, as mentioned above, the latter will fully emerge when Fascism, as it progressively emancipated in the post-war period, devoted itself to successfully practising violent acts of subversion under the banner of law and order, and with the complicity of the establishment.

[28] Aldo Moro used this expression in a 1977 speech, M. Mondini, *Fiume 1919*, cit. p. 40.
[29] Lucio Villari, *La luna di Fiume. 1919: il complotto*, Milan, Guanda, 2019, cit. p. 119.

For Villari, the underestimation of the concrete risk of a coup d'état has gone hand in hand with that of the political D'Annunzio. In fact, a deeply rooted historiographical tradition — whose origins are mainly traced back to De Felice — tends to highlight the literary, aestheticising and narcissistic nature of D'Annunzio's public activity, thus downplaying his political role and responsibility.[30] However, the conspiracy theme can perhaps again be put in parentheses. It is clear that, from the pre-war years to 1920, the poet played a leading political role; although he undoubtedly had a narcissistic and aestheticising component, we could argue that the latter — in keeping with the times — actually enhanced the effectiveness of his actions.

It must nonetheless be added that politics was not D'Annunzio's prevailing characteristic if we consider his figure as a whole, and if Fiume represents the culmination of his career, it is at the same time its conclusion. In fact, looking at his actions in the city and his irregular evolution, we can better grasp a limitation of D'Annunzio's political nature: the difficulty in connecting, in a coherent and constant manner, the plan of concrete action — such as the control of social conflicts in the city or the relationship with the various pressure groups — with that of more or less reliable generalist visions, such as the League of Fiume or the Charter of Carnaro. In Villari's opinion, the latter was inconclusive and made "a major concession to ridiculous messages of palingenesis".[31]

The documentary part of the volume is highly interesting. It consists of various kinds of personal accounts by Oscar Sinigaglia, which are preserved in Guido Jung's private archive in Palermo. The period to which they refer runs from the beginning of April to the beginning of May 1919, when the crisis of the Italian delegation at Versailles reached its peak. The sources reveal how, in parallel with the official negotiations, an equally bitter confrontation unfolded between the Italian delegation and several personalities who were notoriously influential, even at a political level, but without any official capacity: first of all, Sinigaglia himself and Giovanni Giuriati.

The fact that those with public responsibilities unofficially confronted the exponents of a "mobilised" — in Bourdieu's sense — public opinion can be considered a common political practice at the time.[32] The fact that this happened in the documented circumstances and terms, though, calls for a different judgement. Orlando and Sonnino were constantly put under pressure by their interlocutors, who essentially dictated the terms at the negotiating table. It was a request that alternated between judgements and reasoning from which, however, a warning constantly emerged: the political tension in

[30] L. Villari, *La luna di Fiume*, cit. pp. 126-127.

[31] L. Villari, *La luna di Fiume*, cit. pp. 46-47.

[32] Pierre Bourdieu, *L'opinione pubblica non esiste*, in "Problemi dell'informazione", n. 1, 1976, cit. pp. 71-88.

the country being very high, it was only by following those indications that there could be any hope of avoiding extremely risky unrest. Even more unexpected and dramatic was the reaction of the interlocutors: Orlando, the head of the government in office, went so far as to offer his resignation — if explicitly requested — to those who were still only private citizens.[33] Sonnino, who during the neutrality was so jealous of his state secrets that he did not even share them with his ministerial colleagues, almost to tears begged Sinigaglia and his people to guarantee him a minimum of tranquillity in Italy so that he could render the country one last service.[34]

Leaving aside the clash, the two sides evidently agreed on one point: control of the square, which had become a crucial weapon, was in the hands of more or less occult and strong powers, completely eluding the constituted authorities. Is this circumstantial evidence that strongly supports Villari's thesis? Perhaps so, but another consideration is equally important. Beyond the often evoked continuity with the "Radiant May", which also played into Salandra and Sonnino's hands to obtain the legitimisation of a choice that was already formalised by the Treaty of London, the war produced a growth — in both quality and quantity — of public opinion, which made it a politically unavoidable element, while the liberal political class was aware of this but impotent. In essence, Sinigaglia's documents very distinctly confirm Gramsci's judgement, quoted by Villari: "[T]he parliamentary state no longer manages to give a concrete shape to the objective situation of Italy's economic and social life".[35]

For that matter, a work that presents itself with theses that appear far removed from Mondini's ends up intersecting them. The power of propaganda and the strength of a mobilised public opinion are exactly the necessary instruments to condition the Italian delegation at Versailles and, at the same time, to create a climate in the country that is advantageous to the subversive plan. Hence, on closer reading, Mondini's and Villari's works are complementary, and this enriches their interpretative contribution.

Army and nation

In *Il faro del mondo nuovo*, Enrico Serventi Longhi attempts to analyse the Fiume case taking into account what happened both in the city and outside, for the entire period of the events of 1919 and 1920. Two important conclusions can be drawn from his work: instead of making the common distinction between the 1919 phase and the subsequent phase of the entire 1920s, Serventi

[33] L. Villari, *La luna di Fiume*, pp. 168-169.

[34] L. Villari, *La luna di Fiume*, pp. 165-167.

[35] L. Villari, *La luna di Fiume*, pp. 109. The quotation was taken from the issue of "Ordine nuovo" of 4 October 1919.

Longhi's periodisation envisages a third distinct period that broadly includes the summer and autumn of the last year. Next, he identifies recurrent ideological and political features that, in a more or less evident manner, affected the entire affair.

The third period is marked by the removal, or at least by the passing into the background, of characters such as Mario Carli and the very author of the Charter of Carnaro, Alceste De Ambris, two protagonists of the — by now concluded — radical and republican "Fiumanism". D'Annunzio returned to the centre stage without mediations and personally managed what the author calls a "national-socialist twist": Serventi Longhi draws attention to the rituals of the sacralisation of politics, exalts the theme of sacrificial sublimation that accentuated the mournful component of the famous slogan, "me ne frego" (I don't give a damn), and he accelerates the most extreme ideological aspects as if to rally the soldiers in view of the final test. In this context, the very promulgation of the "holy scriptures" — the Charter of Carnaro and The New Order of the Liberating Army — partly takes on the solemnity of a testamentary message.

It is worth noting that, from a different perspective, this final twist contains concepts and themes that were present ever since the beginning of the Fiume adventure. The basic value throughout the two-year period was that of the nation understood as an organic community, whose functional membership is validated by a corporate institutional structure. The value that the war added to this original entity was that of the armed nation: obviously not the kind that is linked to the democratic tradition of Garibaldi or, it must be said, to the recent reflections of Jaurés.[36] The mass conflict simultaneously produced not only a politicisation of the army, but also a militarisation of society, creating a model of nationalisation and power structure that was alternative to that of the liberal tradition. In what was later to be called "the Italy of Vittorio Veneto", the army and society constantly lived in synergic osmosis, which guaranteed their resilience and strength. The legionnaires are an elitist avant-garde, the sublimation of the shock trooper, no longer a tactical variant to the war of position but an all-round figure of the new man, the result of detailed and specific theoretical and practical training. This personal power, which represents and interprets the unity of the community and guarantees direct communication between the base and the summit, is a further necessary element. The nation in question is obviously not a generic or abstract entity: only the Italian nation — heir and legitimate holder of traditional Latin supremacy, which is both ethnic and cultural — is destined to naturally embody and bear these principles.

It should be stressed that these themes do not arise from the Fiume experience alone. Rather, they reflect moods, discourses and hypotheses that circulated widely during the post-war period, in a no-man's land where even

[36] Jean Jaurès, *L'Armée nouvelle*, Paris, Hachette, 2017 (first edition 1911).

opposing radicalisms co-existed. In Fiume, on the other hand, these elements persisted from Giuriati's to De Ambris's Cabinet, up to the third phase highlighted by Serventi Longhi, with different nuances and accents but without ever finding a coherent arrangement.

In this regard, the author's insistence on the substantial weight of D'Annunzio's contribution to the Charter of Carnaro — a suggestive document in its unresolved contamination, and sometimes juxtaposition, between elements stemming from highly different cultures, experiences and sensibilities — is convincing. However, even at the level of practice, we could point to aspects in the Fiume affair that would later characterise an entire strand of twentieth-century politics. Suffice to think of the systematic marginalisation of groups and personalities that had become too intrusive, the accusation of betrayal by those who incautiously tried to criticise positions already endorsed by the Commander, or the need to keep the collective tension constantly high by fuelling consensus with new challenges.

Even such a crucial episode as the end of the modus vivendi can be read as the exemplification of a specific idea of power: the will of a representative body, the National Council, is superseded by that expressed directly by the entire community through the referendum, but above individual judgements — which are gathered in this way — is the true feeling of the community body that, expressed by its only recognised interpreter and confirmed by acclamation, annuls any other judgement by virtue of a sort of *fuhrerprinzip* ahead of its time.

The fact that all these aspects stand out in the events of Fiume must be attributed to the uniqueness of this case: a delimited reality whose break with the past is particularly clear, a level of autonomy that was never legitimised but tolerated for a long time and, consequently, a potential to elaborate and experiment with suggestions of various kinds that was much greater than in any other contemporary context.

In what sense, then, can we speak of a "national-socialist twist", as Serventi Longhi does, particularly with regard to the third phase? The choice of this term is challenging and at the same time ambiguous, if only because it risks reading the Fiume affair through a pre-Nazi lens instead of the — already reductive — pre-Fascist one, as Luciano Zani well observes in his introduction.[37] There is too much distance, in every sense of the word, that separates the Fiume case from the National Socialist phenomenon in Germany. The fact remains, as has already been pointed out, that we can randomly trace elements in Fiume that would later be selected, collected and developed in radically different contexts, first by Fascism and then by National Socialism.

[37] Luciano Zani, *Introduzione. I "reazionari di sinistra e l'impresa fiumana*, in Enrico Serventi Longhi, *Il faro del mondo nuovo. D'Annunzio e i legionari a Fiume tra guerra e rivoluzione*, Udine, Gaspari, 2019 pp. 9-18.

Another risk concerns the fact that the many different aspects of the case are all read and treated in the same way regardless of their concrete impact. The Charter of Carnaro and the revolutionary ordering of the army remain — and will always remain — no more than a theory, the League of Fiume was experimented with for a few months, whereas people like Giuriati or De Ambris had a similar time frame to make their mark. In other words, Fiume lacked the time, and perhaps the opportunity, to try out and develop suggestions, hypotheses and theories, let alone to link them to the preconditions of a possible future regime. This is also why it seems appropriate to place the case in the immediate post-war period, which — not only in Italy — we can reasonably consider to have ended by the mid-1920s.

Art and life

As I have already mentioned, *Alla festa della rivoluzione* by Claudia Salaris has an important historiographical merit. With regard to the most conspicuous aspects of the Fiume affair, namely those that — at the time, but not only — made it the site of an Edenic utopia or a perverse dystopia, this work has overcome two tendencies that are equally unproductive in terms of knowledge production. The easiest and most popular trend reduces the whole affair to its picturesque and transgressive aspects, in line with a not necessarily truthful, scandalising reading that already existed at the time; the opposite tendency dismisses those aspects as substantially irrelevant with respect to the political and ideological components of the event.[38]

Building also on her specific expertise, Salaris bases her analysis on literature, Comisso in the first instance; futurism, used as theory and practice, mainly *La Testa di Ferro* and its founder Mario Carli; the confused but significant cultural arsenal manifested in the "Yoga" association; and many more. From here she moved on to the ceremonial and existential level of celebration, understood in the broadest sense, and to that of more specific and diverse activities such as subsistence and robbery economy.

Salaris's representation of Fiume certainly does not lack local colour: sexual freedom and transgression, the widespread use of drugs, the absurd as a way of life, and the collective celebration of unrestrained excitement. Yet, the whole is read from an anthropological perspective and with theoretical references that give even these phenomena a significant analytical depth. This derives not so much from specific references than from the possibility of inserting a seem-

[38] For more information on the preparation behind Salaris's work see the more recent publication by Simonetta Bartolini, *"Yoga". Sovversivi e rivoluzionari con D'Annunzio a Fiume*, Milan, Luni, 2019, which furthermore reproduces the texts of the association's weekly organ in full.

ingly anecdotal dimension into a continuum that evokes topics of guaranteed importance and different extent.

The biggest hotheads in Fiume were thinking of reviving a traditional festival, the "love castle", to drive away D'Annunzio's lover of the moment whose influence was unwelcome — yet another paradox of a project that never evolved into anything concrete but was no less known and debated for it. However, more lies beyond the quaintness of a fantasy that never happened: the clash between groups to condition the Commander, a female character judged politically cumbersome, the recourse to tradition as a political tool and other possible readings.

This type of approach is enriched, as I have mentioned above, by theoretical references that constantly support the proposed interpretation. In this way, Salaris contributes to valorising a material that is usually used in a wrong way, if at all, even if her reading occasionally seems to be a stretch. It is a fact that the way in which the isolated city was provided for went beyond the merely economic dimension. On the one hand, there was the demonstrative dimension of adventure and challenge; on the other, a network of important relationships was activated through fundraising, the mediation of Senator Borletti and the direct involvement of maritime union leader Beppe Giulietti. Far less convincing is the idea that the repeated seizure of ships and their cargoes — the "pirate economy" in Salaris's words — could be considered an alternative economic model that questioned the gift theory and non-mercantile reciprocity, including D'Annunzio's speeches from the government palace.

But the more general interpretative key that Salaris uses is that of Hakim Bey's TAZ.[39] From this perspective, Fiume was temporarily an autonomous zone; escaping the usual social and institutional constraints, it enjoyed an extraordinary degree of freedom that, in a kind of suspension of time, can only be concentrated and exhausted in the present. However, since the temporary autonomous zones constitute a historically recurrent phenomenon, it becomes possible to connect the Fiume affair — in a no longer impressionistic manner — to a series of other cases that, starting naturally from the protest movements of the 1960s and 1970s, can extend as far as the cyberpunk scene, in one sense, and the ancient pirate communities, in the other.

In the field of history, it is never a question of evaluating a theory as such, but rather of weighing its usefulness to the interpretation of a concrete case. Think, for example, not of the similarities but the differences between 1968 and the Fiume case, or even just those between the role of the economic boom — and of almost a quarter of a century of peace — and that of economies and societies distorted by a war whose end is hard to accept. The reduced heuristic force of the juxtaposition seems evident to me.

[39] Hakim Bey, *TAZ. Zone temporaneamente autonome*, Milan, Shake edizioni underground, 1998 (first edition 1985).

Once again it is difficult to overestimate the weight of the Great War in the whole Fiume affair. To evaluate it also in relation to the phenomena that most interest Salaris, it would be useful to pick up the soldiers' experience, as in Leed's classic analysis, to seek its mirror reflection in the Fiume case.[40] The devastated territory of the trenches and the no-man's land is juxtaposed with the rediscovery of nature, with hikes in the woods and nocturnal gatherings illuminated by torchlight. Technique as an anonymous and ruthless power turns into naval and airborne means of individual "exploits". The motionless anonymity of the infantryman is opposed by the individual or collective legionary protagonism of the raids, the hand-to-hand attacks and the adventurous mockery. The invisible and unspeakable war is succeeded by a military activity whose first purpose is to be shown and communicated as widely as possible. Finally, the irreconcilable rift between the soldier and civil society simply does not exist: legionnaires and Fiuman citizens co-exist in close contact, and the festive dimension enhances their cohesion. It even seems as if the idea of war that animated the enthusiasm of the "comunità d'agosto" in 1914 is reproduced here in an almost virtual manner. Not just a "Caporetto in reverse", according to the famous declaration, but the reverse side of the entire Great War. The fascination with Fiume, the atmosphere that animates it along with the ever-lurking risk of constant monotony due to the long wait, perhaps owes much to this aspect and the almost unconscious feeling of its illusory character.

The Commander

The last publication that I want to discuss here is Giordano Bruno Guerri's *Disobbedisco*, which distinguishes itself from the works examined so far for several reasons. The first two important elements are the sheer size of the volume — over five hundred pages enriched by a selection of images — and the fact that it is clearly conceived and constructed for a broad audience. These two aspects give the volume a strongly episodic structure in which the overall picture emerges from the sum of various — known and unknown — events and personalities, which have been collected in a text that is captivating in both form and substance. It must be added, though, that we are dealing with the work of a specialist, based largely on first-hand sources and which touches on usually neglected aspects of the Fiume affair thanks to close observation. Among other things, the author's extensive use of the Vittoriale Archives allows a glimpse, albeit an occasional one, of the city's everyday social life, which is usually overlooked.[41]

[40] Eric J. Leed, *Terra di Nessuno. Esperienza bellica e identità personale nella Prima guerra mondiale*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1985 (first edition 1979).

[41] Giordano Bruno Guerri, *Disobbedisco. Cinquecento giorni di rivoluzione. Fiume 2019-2020,* Milan, Mondadori, 2019, cit. chapter X.

Gabriele D'Annunzio is consistently at the centre of the work, also functioning as a point of convergence of many different suggestions. Guerri certainly does not approach the "prophet" with merciless or accusing tones, as do Pupo and Villari respectively, but he carefully avoids gratuitous apologies and instead restores the character's contradictions. In particular, the author goes to great lengths to emphasise the Commander's distance from Fascism, especially from Mussolini. If, however, it is clear that — beyond their mutual intolerance — the two come out of the nineteenth-century matrix on contrasting trajectories, all the extenuating circumstances regarding the poet's subsequent relations with Fascism that the author raises in the epilogue do not hide the evidence of a reciprocal and conscious instrumentalisation.

Guerri offers a far more effective reading, thanks also to the meticulous reconstructions, of the Commander's role in the Fiume affair. It is clear that the decision to entrust D'Annunzio with the leadership of the expedition was decisive for its success: Ronchi's march soon turned out to be a military parade that the regular army did not hinder but actually accompanied, and the "storming" of the city was a plebiscitary investiture, without any real objections even from the allied forces. The constituted authorities were aware of the excessive risk of an open confrontation with D'Annunzio, who had added to his pre-war prestige, power and popularity the image of the adventurous and heroic fighter. Fiume remained in its turbulent limbo up to 15 months and came out of it not because of an internal collapse, on which the Italian State had set its hopes until the end, but only thanks to military intervention, the result of which was also quickly muted.

The way the final crisis developed poses a different problem: that of the endurance — among so many objective difficulties — of D'Annunzio's power in the city. This is by no means an absolute and monolithic personal power, and Guerri's text shows this well, thanks also to its wealth of anecdotes. The Commander's actions constantly unfold in a web of relations with actors such as the National Council, the trade unions or the political cabinet, and other actors that are less structured and of a highly varied nature: autonomists and irredentists, monarchists, republicans and Bolshevik Russian sympathisers, career soldiers, police officers, volunteers, cumbersome lovers and close associates, all difficult to keep in check. They all try to push the unquestioned leader to their side, to condition him with initiatives taken independently and to somehow cast their rivals in a negative light. What all these players have in common is the more or less conscious certainty that to question D'Annunzio's authority would mean the end of Fiume; his function, if not that of a tyrant or arbiter, is therefore irreplaceable.

One of the tools that can guarantee this position is undoubtedly his extraordinary ability to bear an aesthetics of politics that, unlike the secular phenom-

enon Mosse studied in Germany,[42] is constantly modelled in a short time and different forms. Fiume is the beacon of the world because its sacrifice testified to the nobility of the ideals that it nurtures, but also because people such as Toscanini and Marconi went there to parade even at the end of 1920. The sublimation, in the rhetoric of the *beau geste*, of the kidnapping of a general or Guido Keller's aerial provocations over Rome is juxtaposed with the mysticism of the last association added to the Charter of Carnaro that "has no art nor nobility nor vocabulary" and refers to the symbol of the burning lamp, the promise of an "effort without effort".[43] On the more everyday level of the mobilising effectiveness of outbursts whose content is often difficult to decipher, we seamlessly move to the legionnaire — but not only — "prophet", who hikes in nature, eats communal meals in the open air and poses in group photos with his favourite dog at his side.

In addition, the Commander exerts his extraordinary inventiveness in an equally improvised invention of tradition, which can combine the civic glories of modern Italy with the exploits of Dalmatian pirates and — on the most diverse occasions — coin Latin mottos and nicknames, honours and decorations. It is a convulsive practice that contributes both to constantly motivating a suspended community and to promoting nearly all its activities — for itself as for its observers. In a different vein, the suppleness and timing of D'Annunzio's aesthetics of politics and invention of tradition, if we may call them such, are instead presented in a "prêt-à-porter" version of a visibly twentieth-century nature.

The idea that everything in Fiume takes place also in the prospect of being instantly enjoyed is certainly part of both D'Annunzio's highly modern inventiveness and the attraction that the city exerts on those who observe it and those who inhabit it. However, in the notebooks in which the Commander described the events, and which Guerri extensively quotes, he often shifts from being a protagonist to becoming a spectator, absorbed in the — already completed — spectacular narration of events. After his unprecedented experience as a mediator in a trade union negotiation, what strikes him is the workers' enthusiastic astonishment at the eloquence with which he voices their reasons.[44] On other occasions, his account of what happened is composed of shreds of images, similar to the notes for an expressionist film: "The atrocious song — the excitement — the walk in the old town. The weeping women"; "The ardour. The intoxication of the song. The aura of the *soviet*. The intoxication of freedom. The passion of women."[45]

[42] George Mosse, *La nazionalizzazione delle masse*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1975 (first edition 1974).

[43] G.B. Guerri, *Disobbedisco*, cit., pp. 321-323.

[44] G.B. Guerri, *Disobbedisco*, cit. pp. 238-239.

[45] G.B. Guerri, *Disobbedisco*, cit. p. 149, p. 152.

If it is true, as De Felice wrote, that D'Annunzio was capable — more than anyone else — of coinciding with "new realities, new problems, new moods, new human and social and, therefore, political solutions that were as disoriented as ever, but which were common to vast sectors of the former fighters and petit-bourgeois youth",[46] then Fiume is certainly the ideal place for this ability to fully manifest itself without having — as Guerri aptly illustrates — a possible sequel.

Conclusion

If we were to identify a distinguishing feature that all examined publications share, we could say that it lies in the choice of pursuing specific themes regarding Fiume, perhaps in the knowledge that this would be the best way to further clarify the overall situation. Viewed from this perspective, unexpected relationships may emerge. Salaris and Pupo, for example, each stress in different ways how important it is to make the city (and what happens there) an object of study to avoid superficial analyses. In this sense, the relevance of diachrony or lived experience somewhat refers to Reill's direct approach, in a field also touched upon — albeit episodically — by Guerri, as I have mentioned above. Mondini's and Serventi Longhi's works highlight the need to closely examine the qualitative and quantitative transformations that took place in the army as a result of the war, and which clearly had an impact on Fiume. Mondini and Villari document — differently yet in a complementary way — the central role of propaganda, directly proportional to the role of public opinion. It then becomes easier to assess what, despite appearances, was from the beginning a matter of domestic rather than foreign policy in the Italian history of the Fiume experience. Finally, Guerri's "Dannunzian" reading, if compared to the other interpretations, contributes to placing the Commander's action in a network of bonds that overturns the one-man-in-charge image.

Fiume is clearly still fertile ground for historians, and a glance at recent approaches gives an idea of topics that remain to be explored. For instance, the variety and importance of female protagonism — from the political to the social field,[47] from educational to voluntary and militant engagement — calls for an analysis from a gender perspective that clears the theme from the worst stereotypes, which are reductive as well as predictable. Inevitably, there is also an extraordinary amount of iconographic material that has thus far only been

[46] Quoted in L. Villari, *La luna*, cit., p. 127.

[47] Several insights in this regard, but also concerning inter-ethnic relations, can be found in Francesca Rolandi, *Un trionfo mai richiesto? Partecipazione politica femminile e rappresentazioni di genere nella stampa locale di Fiume e Susak dopo la grande guerra*, in "Italia contemporanea", n.293, August 2020, cit. pp. 73-98.

examined in an occasional and fragmentary manner. A rigorous approach in terms of visual history — or, if one prefers, visual culture — would finally give the right depth of interpretation to one of the most significant and redundant sources related to the Fiume experience that we can rely on.[48] It is precisely from works like Reill's that we understand how much remains to be said about the life and attitudes of the population during that period and, within this framework, about the dynamics of inter-ethnic relations.[49]

To conclude, the comparative reading of even very dissimilar works cannot but lead one to reflect on their hidden thematic and problematic interconnections, so that the reading of each sheds more light on the results of the others, and vice versa. If the reference to the limits of strictly monothematic approaches even in the sphere of consolidated specialisations may seem obvious or generic, we could argue that the strong territorial and temporal concentration of the Fiume case — together with its originality, despite being exemplary of the European post-war period — makes that reference particularly relevant for future interpretations.

[48] A thematic organisation based on a rich selection of images is offered in M. Franzinelli and P. Cavassini, *Fiume*., op. cit. Exemplary in this field is the recent work by Gabriele D'Autilia, *La guerra cieca. Esperienze ottiche e culture visuali nella grande guerra*, Milan, Meltemi, 2018.

[49] For a recent publication on this topic, see Tea Perincic, *Rijeka or death! D'Annunzio's occupation of Rijeka, 1919-1921*, Rijeka, Naklada Val, 2019.

"If one day that hour returns". The New Left between anti-fascist memories and Third Worldism

Andrea Brazzoduro*[1]

This article offers a new genealogy of the New Left in Western Europe as it developed from the mid-1950s to the mid-1970s. Differently from prevalent interpretations, it reassesses the historical influence of the Algerian War of Independence (1954-1962), and "Third-Worldism" more generally, in the genealogy of the new political cultures that flourished during the global 1960s. A whole generation of activists appropriated the memory of the anti-fascist Resistance, giving it a function that was not simply defensive but also proactive and merging the myth of the "betrayed Resistance" with the idea of imperialism as the "new Fascism". The European civil war, which Enzo Traverso has defined the distinctive feature of the first half of the twentieth century, was thus reconfigured worldwide as a "global civil war".
Key words: New Left, Global 1960s, Anti-fascism; anti-colonialism, Third Worldism, Algerian War of Independence

In 1959, the Italian band Cantacronache recorded the *Canzone del popolo algerino* [Song of the Algerian people], which ended with the following two verses: "Who sent you, soldier, | armed with a rifle? | Who sent you, | young man, to die far away? || Return home, tell, | everything you see: | offended, invaded, destroyed, | the land of Algiers remains standing!"[2] The text and music were written by Michele Luciano Straniero and Fausto Amodei respectively. In about the same period, the two had written another song, *Partigiani fratelli maggiori* [Elder partisan brothers], commissioned by the National Association of Italian Partisans for a tribute ceremony to the partisans killed in Montoso, a mountain village in the northern Piedmont region.

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[2] *Cantacronache 4* (A: *Qualcosa da aspettare - Il giuramento*; B: *Il povero Elia - La canzone del popolo algerino*), Italia Canta C 0008, 1959, 45 rpm EP record. Sleeve notes by Maurizio Corgnati. On the Cantacronache see Chiara Ferrari, *Cantacronache 1958-1962. Politica e protesta in musica*, «Storicamente», 2013, n. 42, DOI: 10.12977/stor495 (all consulted websites were last accessed on 2 June 2020).

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Michele and I decided to participate — Amodei recalls — with a song written for this specific occasion by two people who had not taken part in the Resistance for age-related reasons, in order to assert our relation of brotherhood, in the sense of "inexperienced younger brothers", to the former partisans.[3]

As with the *Canzone del popolo algerino*, the Cantacronache did not hesitate to choose which side to stand on. More importantly, *Partigiani fratelli maggiori* was an explicit and radical break with the spirit of the times. The authoritarian turn of centrism in the 1950s was by no means inclined to pay homage to the partisans, and the song in fact says the following: "If we search through history books, | if we search through the great discourses made of air | we will not find our memory."[4] The Italian band therefore presented itself as the heir and faithful custodian of the memory of the anti-fascist Resistance movement in Italy, of which Ferruccio Parri — one of the highest ethical figures of the Resistance — was considered the legitimate representative. In fact, Parri himself wrote the album sleeve notes, which end with an equally explicit *viaticum*: "1945, 1948 left a suspended delivery. Blessed is the one who picks it up. Hope lives in the song."[5] The final verse of *Partigiani fratelli maggiori* seals this ideal passing of the baton: "A voice in the hour of the dead | has called us to our flags with Italy | to watch over the flame on the mountains; | but if one day that hour returns, | for the dead you left on the mountain, | partisans, call us once again!" For these young people in their early twenties, the Resistance — retrieved almost secretly from the margins to which the dominant political culture had relegated it — is not a story of the past, but rather a precious indication for the future if not already for the present ("but if one day that hour returns").

Towards the end of the 1950s, that is, before the tragic events of July 1960 — also narrated by Amodei in his famous anti-war song, *Per i morti di Reggio Emilia* [Song for the fallen of Reggio Emilia] — and the emergence of a new youth movement, for the Cantacronache band there seems to be no doubt that the spirit of the Resistance continued in the struggles of the present, starting with the Algerians' fight for independence.[6] Michele Straniero, who after 20 years reproposed the *Canzone del popolo algerino* in a 1979 album, made the following observation:

[3] Fausto Amodei, *Nel blu dipinti di rosso*, in Giovanni Straniero, Carlo Rovello (eds.), *Cantacronache: i 50 anni della canzone ribelle. L'eredità di Michele L. Straniero*, Arezzo, Zona, 2008, p. 21.

[4] *Cantacronache 3* (A: *Oltre il ponte - Tredici milioni*; B: *Partigiano sconosciuto - Partigiani fratelli maggiori*), Italia Canta C 0006, 1959, 45 rpm EP record. Sleeve notes by Ferruccio Parri.

[5] *Cantacronache 3*, cit.

[6] *Cantacronache 6* (A: *Il ratto della chitarra - Una carriera*; B: *Ero un consumatore - Per i morti di Reggio Emilia*), Italia Canta C 0016, 1960, 45 rpm EP record. Cover image by Lucio Cabutti.

For my generation, the Algerian war had the same value that the Spanish Civil War had had for our fathers, and that of Vietnam for younger generations: it made us discover oppression and torture, it gave us the moral confidence and conviction that we were on the right side, it helped us to understand the dynamics of history: it was what is generally called "gaining awareness" that helped us to become adults.[7]

In this article, I will present the initial stages of a work in progress, namely the study of the genealogy of the New Left in Western Europe as it developed from the mid-1950s to the mid-1970s. Conversely from mainstream interpretations, I believe that it is necessary to reorganise European *political* geography in such a way that it also includes the (post)colonial space, hence by reconsidering the historical importance of the Algerian War of Independence — and Third Worldism more generally — in the genealogy of the new political cultures that flourished during the long global 1960s.[8] My aim is to develop specific approaches to better understand the emergence of the New Left as a complex process that encompassed local, national and transnational dynamics: a process that was thoroughly linked to decolonisation, which it undoubtedly influenced but by which it was also deeply influenced. In sum, the articles seeks — at the very least — to contribute to challenging the Western narrative of the global 1960s by shifting the perspective from Berkeley and Paris to Algiers.

"*Sous les pavés, le passé*"

The broad periodisation implied in the very concept of the long global 1960s — which I will here refer to as the global 1960s — has enabled an important development in the understanding of the political and social movements that emerged in the second post-war period.[9] While various national historiographies have proposed definitions that are particularly suited to specific contexts,

[7] *Testi delle canzoni con note dell'autore*, in Michele L. Straniero, *La Madonna della Fiat*, Divergo 5335 525 - DVAP 025, 1979, 33 rpm LP record.

[8] On the term "(post)colonial" see Ann Laura Stoler, *Duress: Imperial Durabilities in Our Times*, Durham and London, Duke University Press, 2016, p. IX *passim*.

[9] For a general overview of the global 1960s: Jian Chen e al. (eds.), *The Handbook of the Global Sixties: Between Protest and Nation-Building*, Abingdon, Oxon. and London, Routledge, 2018; Tamara Chaplin, Jadwiga E. Pieper Mooney (eds.), *The Global 1960s: Convention, Contest and Counterculture*, London, Routledge, 2018. On the correctness of a "long" periodisation: Daniel J. Sherman et al. (eds.), *The long 1968: Revisions and New Perspectives*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 2013; Philippe Artières, Michelle Zancarini-Fournel (eds.), *68. Une histoire collective, 1962-1981*, Paris, La Découverte, 2008; Martin Klimke, Joachim Scharloth (eds.), *1968 in Europe: A History of Protest and Activism, 1956-1977*, New York and Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2008; Gerd-Rainer Horn, *The Spirit of '68: Rebellion in Western Europe and the US, 1956-1976*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2007; Arthur Marwick, *The Sixties: Cultural Revolution in Britain, France, Italy, and the United States, c.1958-c.1974*, Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 1998.

for example "period of conflict" (Vidotto) and "period of social movements" (Gallerano) for the Italian case, or "1968 years" (Dreyfus-Armand, de Baecque) in France, the distinguishing element that is being emphasised here (i.e. the conflict, the social movements or the year 1968) is not entirely adequate to hold together different contexts.[10] If the chosen English definition bends to hegemonic newspeak, at the same time it responds to the desire to be part of both a debate and a strand of historiography that are not tied to a national case. Indeed, the concept of the global 1960s has the advantage of combining an extended chronological scan with a spatial dimension that, without being all-encompassing, is not even limited to the national context; instead, it seeks to visualise the wrinkles and points of contact of complex political geographies. In this sense, the global 1960s aims to break away from a short-sighted approach that tends to focus on the Parisian May or, at best, the Free Speech Movement at the University of Berkeley (1964-1965). In the memorable words of Charles S. Maier, "[f]or those who want to study 1968 more deeply, it will be necessary to understand the grip and the ideological hegemony of the 1950s. *Sous les pavés, le passé*".[11]

When I refer to the "New Left", I propose a functional yet flexible category, comparable to the Anglo-American interpretation of "New Left" as a reaction to both Soviet 'state socialism' and the conservative turn of social democracy. It therefore includes all protesters, unlike the Deuxième Gauche or the Nouvelle Gauche in France, which exclude the student militants of the extra-parliamentary revolutionary Left: the New Left as I understand it in this article contains both but is not limited to them.

In his groundbreaking study of the French case, Christoph Kalter explained that in many Western countries the New Left developed from the mid-1950s onwards, in a period that was deeply marked by decolonisation.[12] In leaving the traditional organisations of the "old Left", that is, the workers' movement and political Catholicism, it bitterly opposed the latter; in this generative process, radical anti-colonialism was often one of the qualifying traits of the New Left.[13]

[10] Vittorio Vidotto, *Italiani/e. Dal miracolo economico a oggi*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 2005 (which proposes the "period of conflict" category); Nicola Gallerano, *La stagione dei movimenti e le sue periodizzazioni*, in Paola Ghione, Marco Grispigni (eds.), *Giovani prima della rivolta*, Rome, manifesto libri, 1998, pp. 33-41; Geneviève Dreyfus-Armand, Antoine de Baecque (eds.), *Les Années 68. Le temps de la contestation*, Brussels, Complexe, 2000.

[11] Charles S. Maier, *1968—Did it matter?*, in Vladimir Tismaneanu (ed.), *Promises of 1968: Crisis, Illusion and Utopia*, Budapest; New York, Central European University Press, 2011, pp. 413-434. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are mine.

[12] See Christoph Kalter, *The Discovery of the Third World: Decolonization and the Rise of the New Left in France, c.1950-1976*, Cambridge, UK; New York, Cambridge University Press, 2016.

[13] See, for example, Fabio Guidali, *Culture and political commitment in the non-orthodox Marxist Left: the case of* Quaderni Piacentini *in pre-1968 Italy*, "History of European Ideas", 2020, n. 6, pp. 862-875.

In fact, the New Left saw the anti-colonial struggle as a new type of anti-fascism. Thus, it compared the Algerian liberation movement to the Italian Resistance movement of the Second World War, and their enemies to the Nazis and the Fascists — the Nazis' allies. The strong commitment of French intellectuals to condemn the practice of torture during the so-called "battle of Algiers" (1957) converted the Algerian war into a European ethical divide.[14]

The "battle of Algiers" deeply affected the New Left, though perhaps more because of the famous film directed by the ex-partisan and communist Gillo Pontecorvo.[15] A whole generation of militants appropriated the memory of the Resistance, giving it a connotation that was not only defensive but also activist, superimposing the myth of the "betrayed Resistance" — interrupted by the social revolution, hence still to be fulfilled — on the image of imperialism as the "new Fascism".[16]

The European civil war, which Enzo Traverso described as the distinctive feature of the first half of the twentieth century (1914-1945), was thus reconfigured on a global level as a "global civil war", inaugurated by the Algerian War of Independence.[17] For the militants of the global 1960s, this reactivation of the anti-fascist front had both practical and cultural consequences, and the Algerian Revolution represented a turning point in the political education of many of them. If we recall the "damnés de la terre" from the first line of the French version of *The Internationale*, which Frantz Fanon used for the title of his most celebrated book, *Les Damnés de la terre* (translated in English with the title *The Wretched of the Earth*), in many cases these militants eventually became the "wretched of the revolution".[18]

The reinsertion of the opposition between Fascism and anti-fascism in the framework of a new global civil war provoked an ethical divide. Consequently, the idea of an "absolute enmity against an absolute enemy" emerged, a concept Carl Schmitt had proposed in his *Theory of the Partisan*. Published in 1963, the

[14] Vedi Raphaëlle Branche, *La Torture et l'armée pendant la guerre d'Algérie 1954-1962*, 2nd ed., Paris, Gallimard, 2016; Catherine Brun, Olivier Penot-Lacassagne (eds.), *Engagements et déchirements: Les intellectuels et la guerre d'Algérie*, Paris, Gallimard, 2012; James D. Le Sueur, *Uncivil war. Intellectuals and Identity Politics during the Decolonization of Algeria*, foreword by Pierre Bourdieu, Lincoln and London, Nebraska University Press, 2006. In Italian: Cesare Pianciola, *La guerra d'Algeria e il «manifesto dei 121»*, Rome, edizioni dell'asino, 2017.

[15] See, for an overview, Andrea Brazzoduro, *Il nemico interno. La guerra d'Algeria nel cinema francese*, "Passato e presente", 2009, n. 76, pp. 127-142.

[16] On the extremist interpretation of this aspect, see Marie-Anne Matard-Bonucci, *Des usages de l'antifascisme et de la résistance par les Brigades Rouges*, in Marc Lazar, Marie-Anne Matard-Bonucci (eds.), *L'Italie des années de plomb. Le terrorisme entre histoire et mémoire*, Paris, Autrement, 2010, pp. 16-35.

[17] Enzo Traverso, *A ferro e fuoco. La guerra civile europea (1914-1945)*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2007.

[18] See also Angelo Ventrone (ed.), *I dannati della rivoluzione. Violenza politica e storia d'Italia negli anni Sessanta e Settanta*, Macerata, Edizioni Università di Macerata, 2010.

book was deeply influenced by the author's experience of the Second World War and by the guerrilla warfare that had characterised the recently concluded Algerian war, to which Schmitt often makes reference (especially the trial against Raoul Salan, one of the generals involved in the Algiers putsch).[19] In my opinion, this framework of the global civil war — in which the friend-foe dichotomy, purified of its territorial element (which Schmitt classifies as "telluric"), is reactivated — is an essential feature to explain the new political cultures that emerged during the global 1960s, triggered by decolonisation and the Cold War.[20]

According to Schmitt, the useful criteria for developing a theory of the partisan are "irregularity, increased mobility of the active combat, and a heightened intensity of political commitment". He adds a fourth criterion, "one that Jover Zamora has called his telluric character".[21] Schmitt explains this concept as follows: "Despite all tactical mobility, this characteristic is important for the basically defensive situation of the partisan, *who changes his essence* once he identifies with the absolute aggressiveness of a world-revolutionary or a technicistic ideology."[22] In the absence of the telluric character, that is, the defence of one's own territory, the partisan changes his original character. However, this "distortion" is precisely the distinctive feature of civil war as conceived by the advocates of the global revolution. Schmitt continues:

> Lenin shifted the conceptual center of gravity from war to politics, i.e., to the distinction of friend and enemy. That was significant and, following Clausewitz, a logical continuation of the idea that war is a continuation of politics. But Lenin, as a professional revolutionary of global civil war, went still further and turned the real enemy into an absolute enemy.[23]

Schmitt's starting point was in fact the guerilla war that the Spanish population fought against the French army between 1808 and 1813, where the Spanish partisan had "risked battle on his own home soil".[24] Hence, what characterised

[19] Carl Schmitt, *Theorie des Partisanen. Zwischenbemerkung zum Begriff des Politischen*, Berlin, Duncker&Humbolt, 1963 [*Theory of the Partisan. Intermediate Commentary on the Concept of the Political*, translated by G.L. Ulmen, New York, Telos Press Publishing, 2007, p. 89]. Hannah Arendt had suggested the concept of global civil war in the same year: *On Revolution*, New York, Viking Press, 1963. On this debate see Giorgio Agamben, *Homo sacer II. Stasis. La guerra civile come paradigma politico*, in Id., *Homo Sacer. Edizione integrale*, Macerata, Quodlibet, 2018, pp. 251-310. For a different reading, focused entirely on a critique of the "theorists of totalitarianism", see Céline Jouin, *Préface. La guerre civile mondiale n'a pas eu lieu*, in Carl Schmitt, *La guerre civile mondiale. Essais 1943-1978*, Maisons-Alfort, Ère, 2007, pp. 6-27.

[20] On Schmitt's "deterritorialised" reading see also Neelam Srivastava, *Italian Colonialism and Resistances to Empire, 1930-1970*, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2018. See, for a discussion, my review in "Modern Italy", 2020, vol. 25, Special Issue 4, pp. 478-480.

[21] C. Schmitt, *Theory of the Partisan*, cit., p. 20.

[22] C. Schmitt, *Theory of the Partisan*, cit., p. 20. Italics mine.

[23] C. Schmitt, *Theory of the Partisan*, cit., p. 93.

[24] C. Schmitt, *Theory of the Partisan*, cit., p. 6.

the transition of the European civil war of 1914-1945 to the subsequent global civil war (*Weltbürgerkrieg*) was a change of essence of the partisan, who reconfigured his territorial connectedness by linking it to a much broader struggle.

The *Theory of the Partisan* marked a turning point in comparison to Schmitt's earlier writings. This time, the centre of his reflection was not total war, which exceeds the boundaries of a purely military confrontation to invest all aspects of life (economy and communication, in particular), but the wars of national liberation — above all, guerrilla warfare, which had taken hold from Indochina to Algiers. In this context, the key element is not the fact that the State is "overthrown" (as he wrote, again in 1963, in the new *Foreword* to *The Concept of the Political*, the famous text originally published in 1932), but rather the impact of the Cold War, hence the division of Europe and the world into zones of influence.[25] In fact, the Pax Americana et Sovietica forbade the Communist parties to transform the anti-fascist struggle into a revolutionary war; consequently, Stalin sought to stop any movement in that direction from the Spain of the International Brigades onwards. The decolonisation struggles had the effect of disturbing this balance by putting the civil war and the figure of the partisan — which the Communist parties had conveniently exorcised and embalmed in the wake of the Second World War — back on the agenda.

It is clear, then, why the New Left's militants could not have a direct relationship with the memory of the Resistance. "In a sense, the Communist Party had confiscated its legacy, and our 'postmemory'" — Traverso wrote in the last, autobiographical pages of the introduction to his book on the European civil war — "in reality reflected a rupture with memory. For us, it was yet another 'betrayed' revolution".[26] In the militants' viewpoint, the revival of the Resistance not with a commemorative but an activating function occurred through a classic "return to the origins": incipient Bolshevism, on the one hand; decolonisation and its triumphant myth, on the other. Both these "invented traditions" hinted at the need to transform the imperialist war into civil war, as Traverso recalled:

> As a young militant, I had inherited a set of political categories and, more generally, a lexicon — party, masses, tactics, strategy, insurgency, and so on — that dated back to the time of the European civil war. In the absence of a militia, we demonstrated wearing helmets, accompanied by a military-style security service. Our songs had warlike refrains, calling for arms and sometimes announcing the "civil war", like the anthem of Potere operaio (Workers' Power).[27]

Founded in 1967, the revolutionary Workers' Power party had, in fact, endowed itself with an anthem in 1971. Sung to the score of the famous *Warszawianka 1905 roku*, widespread also among the prisoners of the tsarist regime and later

[25] Carl Schmitt, *Le categorie del «politico»*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1972, p. 90.
[26] E. Traverso, *A ferro e fuoco*, cit., p. 23.
[27] E. Traverso, *A ferro e fuoco*, cit., p. 23.

used by the anarchists during the Spanish civil war (with the title *A las barricadas*), a central verse of the anthem read as follows: "Proletarians are ready to fight, | more bread and more work won't suffice, | they have nothing to lose but their chains | and there is a whole world to gain. | Let's leave the assembly lines and pick up the gun, | come on comrades the civil war has begun!"

In this article, I use the concept of "global civil war" in this very sense, that is, not as a precise historiographical definition but, rather, as an operational category that undoubtedly has more to do with self-representation. Yet, as the history of mentalities has taught us at least from the *Annales* onwards, cultural frameworks, discursive regimes and repertoires of action are not idealistic prejudices but extremely effective devices in defining the conditions of the possibility of experience — what Koselleck has called the relationship between the horizon of expectation and the space of experience.[28]

In other words, I am suggesting that the Algerian War of Independence, despite having received relatively little attention in studies of the long 1960s, occupies a key position in the genealogy of the New Left, given that it established the political and conceptual framework — namely the global civil war — through which Castro and Guevara's victory (Cuba, 1959) or the triumph of the Vietcong (Tet offensive, 1968) would later be read and understood. Although Cuba and Vietnam undoubtedly became essential references in the revolutionary canon, they occurred far from the European continent; it is precisely this geographical distance that enabled Algiers to gradually take their place within the New Left's pantheon, offering a far more efficient screen on which to project the desires and (exotic) dreams of the nation's political imagination. Algiers was different not only because of its position on the southern shore of the Mediterranean basin, but also in view of its specific "external interiority" as opposed to European *political* geography. After all, did de Gaulle not say that "the Mediterranean runs through France as the Seine runs through Paris?" It is therefore fair to ask what Europe was — and what it was not — after Algeria became independent, and further still, what Algeria was.[29] The perspective that I propose moves away from the usual approaches to the history of political parties or international relations, focusing instead on Jean-François Sirinelli's definition of the "cultural history of the political".[30]

[28] Reinhart Koselleck, *Vergangene Zukunft. Zur Semantik geschichtlicher Zeiten*, Frankfurt am Main, Suhrkampf, 1979.

[29] See Todd Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization: The Algerian War and the Remaking of France*, Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 2006.

[30] See Jean-François Sirinelli, *Histoire culturelle et histoire politique*, in Christian Delporte, Jean-Yves Mollier, Jean-François Sirinelli (eds.), *Dictionnaire d'histoire culturelle de la France contemporaine*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 2010, pp. 398-401; Jean-François Sirinelli, *De la demeure à l'agora. Pour une histoire culturelle du politique*, "Vingtième Siècle", 1998, n. 57, pp. 121-131; Serge Berstein, *La culture politique*, in Jean-Pierre Rioux, Jean-François Sirinelli

In this regard, it is worth looking at the anti-colonialist militant networks *in* and *between* Italy, France and obviously Algeria (the "Mecca of revolution", in Cabral's words), which have been considered a key aspect of the global 1960s.[31] The chosen periodisation, which is necessarily wide-ranging, takes the "battle of Algiers" (1957) as *terminus post quem* and the fall/liberation of Saigon (1975) as *terminus ad quem* (1975): for the New Left's transnational audience, the former represents the short circuit between the Algerian war and the memory of the Shoah and the Second World War, whereas the latter marks the end of Third Worldism as a political project.[32]

A "comprehensive perceptive filter"

Recently four different historiographical debates have come to intersect with each other, the first of which has accompanied a profound renewal of studies on the European memories of the Resistance.[33] As demonstrated by the extract from the Cantacronache quoted at the beginning of this article, the memories of the Second World War — and in particular of the anti-fascist Resistance — are undoubtedly a key feature of the New Left's political imagination.[34]

(eds.), *Pour une histoire culturelle*, Paris, Seuil, 1997; Jean-François Sirinelli (ed.), *Histoire des droites en France*, vol. 2, *Cultures*, Paris, Seuil, 1992.

[31] On Cabral see Jeffrey James Byrne, *Mecca of Revolution: Algeria, Decolonization and the Third World Order*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2016, p. 3.

[32] On the former, see Michael Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization*, Stanford, Calif., Stanford University Press, 2009; on the latter, see instead Christoph Kalter, *From Global to Local and Back: the "Third World" Concept and the New Radical Left in France*, "Journal of Global History", 2017, n. 1, pp. 115-136.

[33] See, for a not exhaustive overview, Istvan Deak, *Europe on Trial: The Story of Collaboration, Resistance, and Retribution During World War II*, New York-London, Routledge, 2nd ed., 2018; Olivier Wieviorka, *Une Histoire de la résistance en Europe occidentale*, Paris, Perrin, 2017; Robert Gildea, *Fighters in the Shadows: A New History of the French Resistance*, Cambridge, Mass., Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2015; Olivier Wieviorka, *La Mémoire désunie. De la Libération à nos jours*, Paris, Seuil, 2014; Filippo Focardi, Bruno Groppo (eds.), *L'Europa e le sue memorie. Politiche e culture del ricordo dopo il 1989*, Rome, Viella, 2013; Jorg Echternkamp, Stefan Martens (eds.), *Experience and Memory: The Second World War in Europe*, New York-Oxford, Berghahn, 2010; Richard Ned Lebow, Wulf Kansteiner, Claudio Fogu (eds.), *The Politics of Memory in Postwar Europe*, London, Duke University Press, 2006; Filippo Focardi, *La guerra della memoria. La Resistenza nel dibattito politico italiano dal 1945 a oggi*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 2005; Pieter Lagrou, *The Legacy of Nazi Occupation: Patriotic Memory and National Recovery in Western Europe, 1945-1965*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000; Alessandro Portelli, *L'ordine è già stato eseguito. Roma, le Fosse Ardeatine, la memoria*, Rome, Donzelli, 1999.

[34] See, for example, García Hugo et al. (eds.), *Rethinking Antifascism: History, Memory and Politics, 1922 to the Present*, New York, Berghahn, 2016; Andrea Hajek, *Negotiating Memories of Protest in Western Europe: The Case of Italy*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2013; Philip E. Cooke, *The Legacy of the Italian Resistance*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2011; Martin

Nevertheless, while a vast number of studies have drawn attention to this relationship, existing historiography has insufficiently examined the role of decolonisation (especially in the Algerian context) as a stimulus for this reactivation of the past in the present.[35] The memory of the anti-fascist struggle — and, accordingly, of the Nazi occupation — has played a key role in the imagination of these transnational networks of militants, acting for a few decades as a "comprehensive perceptive filter".[36] For a generation that considered itself to be part of a revolutionary story, Jean-Paul Sartre's prison visit to Andreas Baader — the hunger-striking founder of the Red Army Faction — in December 1974 undeniably linked the points of a constellation ranging from the Second World War via the Algerian war to the new anti-fascism — converted to a global civil war.[37] Not only powerful images and myths travelled from one point to another within this "invented tradition", but also what Charles Tilly has called "repertoires of collective action".[38]

This conceptual tool allows us to approach the debate on social movements and political violence from a new perspective.[39] Indeed, with a few notable exceptions, existing scholarship has underestimated the influence of the Algerian war and decolonisation in the genealogy of the "repertoires" of the New Left, from the sit-in to urban guerrilla warfare.[40] Consequently, this litera-

Evans, *The Memory of Resistance: French Opposition to the Algerian War (1954-1962)*, Oxford, Berg, 1997.

[35] There are, of course, some exceptions: Robert Gildea, Andrew Tompkins, *The Transnational in the Local: The Larzac Plateau as a Site of Transnational Activism since 1970*, "Journal of Contemporary History", 2015, n. 3, pp. 581-605; M. Evans, *The Memory of Resistance*, cit.

[36] Petra Terhoeven, *Hitler's Children? German Terrorism as part of the Transnational "New Left Wave"*, in Alberto Martin Alvarez, Eduardo Rey Tristan (eds.), *Revolutionary Violence and the New Left. Transnational Perspectives*, London, Routledge, 2017, p. 129.

[37] See Ian H. Birchall, *Sartre et l'extrême gauche française. Cinquante ans de relations tumultueuses*, Paris, La fabrique, 2011; Paige Arthur, *Unfinished Projects. Decolonization and the Philosophy of Jean-Paul Sartre*, London and New York, Verso, 2010.

[38] Charles Tilly, *Popular Contention in Great Britain, 1758-1834*, Cambridge, Mass. and London, Harvard University Press, 1995. See also Cécile Péchu, *Répertoire d'action*, in Olivier Fillieule, Lilian Mathieu, Cécile Péchu (eds.), *Dictionnaire des mouvements sociaux*, Paris, Presses de Sciences Po, 2009, pp. 454-462.

[39] On this topic, see M. Alvarez Alberto, E. Rey Tristan (eds.), *Revolutionary Violence and the New Left*, cit.; Isabelle Sommier, *La violence politique et son deuil. L'après 68 en France et en Italie*, Rennes, Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2015; Petra Terhoeven, *Deutscher Herbst in Europa. Der Linkterrorismus der siebziger Jahre als transnationales Phänomen*, München, Oldenbourg, 2014; Guido Panvini, *Ordine nero, guerriglia rossa. La violenza politica nell'Italia degli anni 1960-1970*, Turin, Einaudi, 2009; Jeremy Varon, *Bringing the War at Home. The Weather Underground, the Red Army Faction, and the Revolutionary Violences in the Sixties and Seventies*, Berkeley and London, Berkeley University Press, 2004; Donatella della Porta, *Social Movements, Political Violence, and the State: A Comparative Analysis of Italy and Germany*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995.

[40] See, for example, Quinn Slobodian, *Foreign Front. Third World Politics in Sixties West Germany*, Durham, NC. and London, Duke University Press, 2012.

ture has only partially managed to explain how and why, towards the end of the global 1960s, a significant number of these militants discovered — "like Fanon's Algerian peasants", in Hannah Arendt's words — that "only violence pays".[41]

Another historiographical trend that we need to weave into this analytical perspective is the one that began to reconsider the "long 1960s" in a less Euro-Atlantic perspective, shifting the focus towards the "Global South" and its interactions with Europe.[42] Particularly useful in tackling the challenge that this complex simultaneous spatiality poses is the toolbox offered by global history, which does not merely study a generic impact of "Third Worldism" in one or more national cases. Although many definitions of this approach exist, these are often contradictory.[43] The most interesting are those interpretations that consider global history not so much as a new disciplinary field but as a mental attitude aimed at casting a light on the transformative dimension of trans-local encounters (and clashes), as proposed by global microhistory (Trivellato), connected history (Subrahmanyam) or micro-spatial history (De Vito).[44] In other words, it is a question of visualising historical processes not only within the framework of the nation-state, but also in that of "alternative or complementary spaces […] within which historical actors formed social relationships and interpreted their world".[45]

This sensibility is even more effective when combined with oral history methodology, as a recent pioneering study on 1968 in Europe has demonstrated.[46] Nevertheless, most of these studies focus on East-West exchanges, and in doing so ignore the North-South dimension. Moreover, we need to encompass a global intellectual history and a bottom-up approach by focusing on the cultures and practices of grassroots activists' networks.

[41] Hannah Arendt, *On violence*, New York, Harcourt Brace, 1970, p. 14. On these aspects see the case study of the "Quaderni piacentini" by Fabio Guidali, *Culture and political commitment in the non-orthodox Marxist Left: the case of* Quaderni piacentini *in pre-1968 Italy*, "History of European Ideas", 2020, n. 6, pp. 862-875.

[42] See, for example, C. Kalter, *The Discovery of the Third World*, cit.; Françoise Blum, Pierre Guidi, Ophélie Rillon (eds.), *Étudiants Africains en mouvements. Contributions à une histoire des années 1968*, Paris, Publications de la Sorbonne, 2016; Marica Tolomelli, *L'Italia dei movimenti. Politica e società nella prima repubblica*, Rome, Carocci, 2015; Q. Slobodian, *Foreign Front*, cit.

[43] Elsewhere I have offered a broad historiographical exploration of global history: *Oltre la storia nazionale? Tre risposte alle sfide della global history*, "Passato e presente", 2019, n. 108, pp. 131-148.

[44] See Francesca Trivellato, *Is there a future for Italian microhistory in the age of global history?*, "California Italian Studies", 2011, n. 1; Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Mondi connessi. La storia oltre l'eurocentrismo*, Rome, Carocci, 2014; Christian G. de Vito, *History Without Scale: The Micro-Spatial Perspective*, "Past & Present", 2019, n. 242, pp. 348-372.

[45] C. Kalter, *The Discovery of the Third World*, cit., p. 5.

[46] See Robert Gildea, James Mark, Anette Warring (eds.), *Europe's 1968: Voices of Revolt*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2013.

New political cultures

In this article, I advance the hypothesis that radical anti-colonialism started to imagine itself as a new type of anti-fascism during the Algerian War of Independence, that is, when it reconnected with a proactive memory of the Resistance. In fact, the Algerian war not only replicated the Second World War, with the roles reversed as the Nazis were replaced by the French; Algeria was part and parcel of the history of the European anti-fascist struggle. Thus, "Algerian" soldiers had fought for the liberation of Europe in the French army, and between 1942 and 1944 — when de Gaulle was in London — Algiers was the capital of the "*France libre*", under the command of the Comité français de liberation nationale.[47] Looking at the anti-colonialist networks *in* and *between* Algeria, France and Italy, it thus becomes necessary to study the lives, experiences and memories of grassroots militants — men as well as women — who, in different ways, were involved in these networks. Who were they, and how did they become militants? What were their tasks and desires? Which other networks were they involved in? How did they imagine their "enemy", and how did they see themselves? And 60 years later, how did they reconstruct their memories of this anti-colonial militancy? Could we say that the Algerians, French and Italians share a common ethos? If so, what is this ethos? How did the New Left and the Algerian Revolution mutually influence each other, before and after Algeria became independent?

Many women fought in the Algerian Revolution: were these women influenced by Western models to the same extent that these would influence them, through figures such as Djamila Boupacha? Boupacha was a 22-year-old militant in the groups of the National Liberation Front that were involved in urban terrorist acts during the "battle of Algiers". She gained international attention after being tortured and raped by the French paratroopers and — for the first time — publicly denouncing these crimes.[48] Pablo Picasso drew a portrait of her, which was published in 1962 on the front page of *Les Lettres françaises*,[49] and which was also used in Simone de Beauvoir and Gisèle Halimi's book *Djamila Boupacha*.[50] In the same year, the book was translated into Italian, but with a new title: *I carnefici* [The butchers].

[47] See Eric Jennings, *La France libre fut africaine*, Paris, Perrin, 2014.

[48] See Claire Mauss-Copeaux, *La vita vera. Le donne algerine nella guerra d'indipendenza*, "Zapruder", 2019, n. 50, pp. 16-43; Natalya Vince, *Our Fighting Sisters: Nation, Memory and Gender in Algeria, 1954-2012*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2015.

[49] See Pierre Daix, *"Les Lettres françaises". Jalons pour l'histoire d'un journal, 1941-1972*, Paris, Tallandier, 2004.

[50] Simone de Beauvoir, Gisèle Halimi, *Djamila Boupacha*, Paris, Gallimard, 1962. On Picasso's lithography, see Laurent Gervereau, *Des bruits et des silences. Cartographie des représentations de la guerre d'Algérie*, in Laurent Gervereau, Jean-Pierre Rioux, Benjamin Stora (eds.), *La France en guerre d'Algérie*, Nanterre, MHC-BDIC, 1992, p. 197.

Although it was undoubtedly meant to draw attention to the scandal of a "female partisan" tortured with methods that were identical to those used by the Nazi-Fascists, it inadvertently ended up overturning the subject of history.[51] What is less known is that, beyond the small circle of music lovers and scholars that surrounded Boupacha, the renowned Italian composer Luigi Nono dedicated one of his *Canti di vita e d'amore* [Songs of life and love] to her in that same year.[52]

At the end of the 1950s, new communication technologies, the opening of unprecedented media markets and a mobility that would have been unthinkable only a few years before, contributed to radically changing the meaning of the term "world".[53] The texts and images of Fanon, Guevara, Castro, Lumumba, Ho Chi Minh or Boupacha evoked the feeling of a shared — albeit asymmetrical — space in which the Third World had moved from the periphery to the centre.[54]

Located at the crossroads of political and cultural history, the dynamic "political cultures" discipline can help us to better understand this "new world", which was slowly taking shape. According to Jean-François Sirinelli and Eric Vigne, a political culture consists of "a sort of code" and "a range of referents" that can be "formalised within the framework of a party" or more diversely distributed "within a political family or a political tradition".[55] This approach is particularly useful: on the one hand, for the analysis of the interaction between decolonisation and the political cultures traditionally represented by social democracy, communism and political Catholicism in Western Europe during the Cold War;[56] on the other hand, for the study of the contemporaneous formation — both in and outside political parties — of a new, anti-colonial and anti-imperialist ethic.[57] In this sense, the Algerian War of Independence

[51] Simone de Beauvoir, Gisèle Halimi, *I carnefici*, translated by Gianna Carullo and Carlo Cignetti, Rome, Editori Riuniti, 1962. See Andrea Brazzoduro, *Voir/ne pas voir l'Algérie. La gauche italienne et la lutte des Algériens*, in Moula Bouaziz, Aïssa Kadri, Tramor Quemeneur (eds.), *La guerre d'Algérie revisitée. Nouvelles générations, nouveaux regards*, Paris, Karthala, 2015, pp. 331-338.

[52] See Bruce Durazzi, *Luigi Nono's* Canti di vita e d'amore*: Musical Dialectics and the Opposition of Present and Future*, "The Journal of Musicology", 2010, n. 4, pp. 451-480.

[53] See Richard Ivan Jobs, *Youth Movements: Travel, Protest, and Europe in 1968*, "The American Historical Review", 2009, n. 2, pp. 376-404.

[54] The relevant bibliography is growing rapidly, but for an example see Matthias de Groof (ed.), *Lumumba in the Arts*, Leuven University Press, 2019.

[55] Jean-François Sirinelli, Eric Vigne, *Introduction: Des cultures politiques*, in J.-F. Sirinelli (ed.), *Histoire des droites en France*, cit., vol. 2, pp. iii-iv.

[56] See Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2007; Matthew Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution: Algeria's Fight for Independence and the Origins of the Post-Cold War Era*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2002.

[57] See Dipesh Chakrabarty, *The Legacies of Bandung: Decolonization and the Politics of Culture*, in Christopher J. Lee (ed.), *Making a World After Empire: The Bandung Moment and*

also represented a turning point, revealing divisions and discontent within the organisations of the traditional Left that — in the eyes of the anti-colonialist militants — appeared ever more delegitimised, morally speaking. It was the Algerian peasants and Cuban guerrilla fighters, and not the workers and trade unionists of the First World, who represented the real actors of the global revolution that the emerging New Left was dreaming of.

It is clear, then, that Third Worldism represented a political project more than a geographical space.[58] At the same time, it was an attempt to experiment with other political geographies that destabilised the binary status quo of the Cold War.[59] Parties that can be considered New Left parties, such as the Unified Socialist Party (Parti Socialiste Unifié) in France or the Italian Socialist Party of Proletarian Unity (Partito Socialista Italiano di Unità Proletaria), were born precisely at this political and cultural juncture, conveniently blending this new sensibility with national and local features.[60]

In a diachronic study of how the traditional organisations of the Left reacted to the theme of decolonisation, the key question is, then, as follows: why did this reaction become unsatisfactory for a growing number of militants, subsequently giving birth to what would later be called the New Left? Was the "horizon of expectation" of the Algerian National Liberation Front — and later also of the opposition movements (e.g. the *imazighen* [Berbers], Hocine Aït Ahmed's Front de forces socialistes, etc.) — influenced by the rise of the New Left (especially through the figures of the *coopérants* and *pieds-rouges*)? If so, how? Using a different perspective than those currently available to us, we must try to visualise and assess the consistency of these new transnational political cultures that, although they still somewhat overlap with the Cold War framework, also progressively exceed it. Furthermore, it is in this framework that we need to reconsider the issue of political violence, namely by attributing the origins of the global civil war to the radicalisation of the repertoires of collective action.

In this context, the importance of an author like Frantz Fanon must not be underestimated. *The Wretched of the Earth*, in particular, was undoubtedly a

Its Political Afterlives, preface by Vijay Prashad, Athens, Ohio University Press, 2nd ed., 2019, pp. 45-68.

[58] According to Vijay Prashad, *The Darker Nations: A People History of the Third World*, New York-London, New Press, 2007.

[59] See Quin Slobodian, *Bandung in Divided Germany: Managing Non-Aligned Politics in East and West, 1955-63*, "The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History", 2013, n. 4, pp. 644-662.

[60] See, for example, Aldo Agosti, *Il partito provvisorio. Storia del Psiup nel lungo Sessantotto italiano*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 2013; Noëlline Castagnez e al. (eds.), *Le Parti socialiste unifié. Histoire et posterité*, Renes, Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2013; Daniel A. Gordon, *A "Mediterranean New Left"? Comparing and Contrasting the French PSU and the Italian PSIUP*, "Contemporary European History", 2010, n. 4, pp. 309-330.

bestseller of the global 1960s.[61] Yet, he was more than a theorist of violence, as a successful yet superficial reading of Fanon has sought to present him; thanks to Fanon, the Algerian War of Independence became comprehensible for the New Left, which conceived of decolonisation also in terms of decolonising itself from a broad and variegated display of power, in both its material and epistemic forms.[62] Fanon's work, like Marx's *Manuscripts* of 1844, thus became a tool to understand and fight the alienation of capitalism.

Nevertheless, given the very strong involvement of intellectuals in the debate (to the extent that the war has also been called a "bataille de l'écrit"), it is worth shifting the focus to less senior figures: the women and men who were active in the trade unions, in party sections, in the church, in universities, in the press.[63] This means, for example, taking into account not only Fanon but also the Milanese research centre that was dedicated to him (who its members were, how it was organised, what it focused on),[64] or studying the solidarity letters that hundreds of Italian militants (male and female) wrote — via the organ of the Italian Communist Party, *l'Unità* — to the companion of Henri Alleg, director of the communist daily *Alger républicain* and author of a pamphlet of denunciation (*La Question*), while he was being held in prison and tortured by the paratroopers.[65] These two examples — one widespread, the other more specific — are very different expressions of the same phenomenon of "partisanship", that is, of active support for the Algerian War of Independence.

New Left militants: "dreamers who came to build a more perfect world"

In this last section, I will discuss three apparently anomalous case studies of New Left militants, starting with Elaine Mokhtefi. Born Elaine Klein in modest Jewish circles in New York, she moved to Paris in 1951 — 23 years of

[61] The bibliography is very rich, but two recent works are worth mentioning here: Kathryn Batchelor, Sue-Ann Harding (eds.), *Translating Frantz Fanon Across Continents and Languages*, London, Routledge, 2017; Neelam Srivastava, *Le Fanon italien: révélation d'une histoire éditoriale enfouie*, in Frantz Fanon, *Écrits sur l'aliénation et la liberté. Textes inédits réunis par Jean Khalfa et Robert J.C. Young*, Paris, La Découverte, 2016, pp. 565-583.

[62] See Nigel C. Gibson, Roberto Beneduce, *Frantz Fanon, Psychiatry and Politics*, London-New York, Rowman & Littlefield International, 2017.

[63] For a pioneering survey "on a local scale", see Raphaëlle Branche, Sylvie Thénault (eds.), *La France en guerre 1954-1962. Expériences métropolitaines de la guerre d'indépendance algérienne*, Paris, Autrement, 2008.

[64] See Tullio Ottolini, *Dal* soutien *alla cooperazione. Il terzomondismo in Italia fra il Centro di Documentazione Frantz Fanon e il Movimento Liberazione e Sviluppo*, Alma Mater Studiorum Università di Bologna, doctoral thesis, 2018.

[65] See Nicola Lamri, *L'Italia e la battaglia di Algeria*, «Jacobin», 17 September 2020.

age — to "drink at the fountain of the past".[66] At the time, her main historical and political reference was the Second World War. Her passionate memoirs open with a reference to the Nazi occupation of France: having grown up during the war, the latter is Elaine's main reference point on arrival in Paris.

A year later, her so-called "enlightenment" occurred, when she witnessed the brutal police repression of an Algerian group of protesters during the May Day parade.[67] From 1950 onwards, the Algerians joined the traditional demonstrations of the worker's movement on May Day and on 14 July, especially in Paris, where they formed a section that the security service positioned at the back of the demonstration; this proves their growing disagreement with the hegemonic Communist Party.[68] As became increasingly common in the 1950s, the police opened fire. On 1 May 1952, four people were killed in Paris, Le Havre and Montbéliard, in an escalation that characterised the convulsive sequence prior to the uprising in Algeria, culminating in the shooting of six Algerians at the demonstration of 14 July 1953 in Paris.[69]

Elaine Mokhtefi thus discovered the "lie" of the French colonial republic.[70] She wrote that "[t]he Algerian War became the defining issue of the 1950s in Europe. Everyone took sides, and wherever I lived — in France, Switzerland and Belgium — I became involved, marching in anti-war demonstrations, introducing resolutions, denouncing torture".[71] For this reason, we could say that Mokhtefi — while born in America — was influenced by the French context and by the Algerian War of Independence to such an extent as to merit an inclusion in the ranks of the militants of the nascent New Left.

After she had returned to New York to work for the delegation of the provisional government of the Algerian Republic, in the summer of 1962 she moved to Algiers. In those years, the city had become a meeting point (and a free trade city) for all kinds of organisations of the revolutionary New Left:

> I came to know exiles from Spain and Portugal, opponents of the military dictators Franco and Salazar, as well as others from Brazil, Argentina, Venezuela, and Central America, political opponents as well as representatives of guerrilla movements. Ever imaginable liberation organisation had an office in Algiers, from the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam (the Vietcong) to the ANC, SWAPO, FRELIMO, the MPLA, student hijackers from Ethiopia, and Palestinian liberation organisations.[72]

[66] Elaine Mokhtefi, *Algiers, Third World Capital. Freedom Fighters, Revolutionaries, Black Panthers*, Brooklyn, Verso, 2018, p. IX.

[67] E. Mokhtefi, *Algiers, Third World Capital*, cit., p. 6.

[68] See Alain Ruscio, *Les communistes et l'Algérie. Des origins à la guerre d'indépendance, 1920-1962*, Paris, La Découverte, 2019, pp. 165-171.

[69] See Emmanuel Blanchard, *Histoire de l'immigration algérienne en France*, Paris, La Découverte, 2018, p. 64; Daniel Kupferstein, *Les balles du 14 juillet 1953. Le massacre policier oublié de nationalistes algériens à Paris*, Paris, La Découverte, 2017.

[70] E. Mokhtefi, *Algiers, Third World Capital*, cit., p. 6.

[71] E. Mokhtefi, *Algiers, Third World Capital*, cit., pp. 16-17.

[72] E. Mokhtefi, *Algiers, Third World Capital*, cit., p. 69.

In 1969 she met Eldrige Cleaver, the Black Panther Party's minister of information who arrived in Algiers in June. Elaine Mokhtefi became a mediator between the Algerian authorities and the Black Panthers, first working as an interpreter and then progressively entering the group as a "comrade". At the end of her memoirs, she described her relation with Algiers as follows: "My story with Algeria has invaded and occupied my being forever. I was one of the dreamers who came to build a more perfect world."[73]

A second interesting case study is that of Elaine's husband, Mokhtar Mokhtefi, whom she met in Algeria during the Revolution. A butcher's son, Mokhtar Mokhtefi was born in 1935 in Berrouaghia, a town in the present-day *wilaya* of Médéa, about a hundred kilometres south of Algiers. The youngest of six, Mokhtar was the only sibling to continue his studies beyond primary school, thanks to the foresight of a teacher who recognised his extraordinary abilities and managed to convince Mokhtar's defiant father to let his son benefit from the opportunities that the school could offer him. Mokhtar went to high school in Blida, before becoming a *maître d'internat* in Constantine. He eventually discovered metropolitan France in a sort of journey of formation, and when he joined the Algerian Front of National Liberation in 1957, he developed a political and militant awareness in favour of a free, democratic and independent Algeria.

> In high school I lived in the midst of the Europeans, I discovered their way of life though without understanding their indifference to anything related to their Algerian classmates. They don't want to know us, they are happy with the prejudices that their parents have instilled in them: they don't realise that ignorance of the other generates fear, that this fear is transformed into the arrogance and racism of the victors. But what pains me most is the trench that has been dug between my parents and me. Without wanting to, I mentally feel very distant from them.[74]

Mokhtar Mokhtefi's biographical path is certainly not representative of Algeria, still a predominantly rural and largely illiterate nation at the time of the war of liberation. Nevertheless, Mokhtefi's story is indicative of a not insignificant minority, which we could define as "exceptional normal", to use the oxymoron introduced by the micro-historian Edoardo Grendi.[75]

In his memoirs, Mokhtefi stressed the important contribution of the Algerian youth and student associations to the struggle for independence, which culminated in the strike of 19 May 1956). Thus, he made the following observation about the quarterly forum of the Algerian Youth Association for Social Action, held in Sidi Ferruch in April 1955:

[73] E. Mokhtefi, *Algiers, Third World Capital*, cit., p. 210.

[74] Mokhtar Mokhtefi, *J'étais Français-Musulman. Itinéraire d'un soldat de l'ALN*, Alger, Barzakh, 2016, p. 128.

[75] Edoardo Grendi, *Micro-analisi e storia sociale*, "Quaderni storici", 1977, n. 35, pp. 506-520.

In a rural setting, young people coming from all communities, boys and girls, question each other amicably. They belong to the Young Christian Students or the Young Christian Workers (JEC and JOC), to the Union of Jewish students and to various Algerian organisations. They discuss the country's problems without fear of addressing political issues or evoking injustice, repression, the absence of freedom.[76]

Most importantly, Mokhtefi's story fully reintegrates Algeria and its inhabitants into the global 1960s, and not through a diplomatic history or international relations approach, but from the opposite end of the spectrum: through a history of Mokhtar's readings, interests, journeys and encounters. One example of this is when Mokhtefi and his friend Mohamed travelled to France to find themselves at the La Bocca international campsite near Cannes, in the company of French, Dutch and Yugoslavian youngsters.[77]

A third rather unusual story is that of Giovanni Pirelli.[78] The oldest son of the great Italian tyre maker, Giovanni participated in the Russian campaign and then in the Resistance, two fundamental experiences for the development of his political identity. On 7 May 1946, when his father retrieved the family business from the partisans who had been running it, Giovanni informed him of his decision to join the Socialist Party of Proletarian Unity.[79] A year later, in May 1947, the anti-fascist front fell apart.

In reaction to this turn of events (i.e. the authoritarian restoration guided by the Christian Democrat party), Pirelli agreed to collaborate with Piero Malvezzi on a study that led to "a priceless document and monument" (Goffredo Fofi): their collection of letters written by Italian partisans on the verge of being executed, the *Lettere dei condannati a morte della Resistenza italiana* [Letters of the Italian Resistance fighters condemned to death] (1952), followed by the *Lettere dei condannati a morte della Resistenza europea* [Letters of the European Resistance fighters condemned to death] (1954).[80] In the same year that the latter was published, the Algerian War of Independence began. Pirelli, like most intellectuals and Resistance militants, increasingly considered the war as the new front in the anti-fascist struggle. In 1961, he wrote the following:

The wave of anti-fascism provoked by the Eichmann trial? It is useful. Sure, it is also useful. As will be the trial against a Massu or a Salan, in a few decades, for the million Algerians

[76] M. Mokhtefi, *J'étais Français-Musulman*, cit., p. 123.

[77] See M. Mokhtefi, *J'étais Français-Musulman*, cit., pp. 136 sg.

[78] For more information on Pirelli see Mariamargherita Scotti, *Vita di Giovanni Pirelli. Tra cultura e impegno militante*, Rome, Donzelli, 2018. An anthology of texts can be found in Mariamargherita Scotti (ed.), *Giovanni Pirelli, intellettuale del Novecento*, Sesto San Giovanni, Mimesis, 2016.

[79] See Nicola Tranfaglia, *Vita di Alberto Pirelli (1882-1971). La politica attraverso l'economia*, Turin, Einaudi, 2010, p. 320.

[80] Goffredo Fofi, *Prefazione*, in Diane Weill-Ménard, *Vita e tempi di Giovanni Pirelli*, Milan, Linea d'ombra, 1994, p. 8.

who died in what is essentially a Nazi war, which is taking place in the present day under our eyes of licensed anti-fascists.[81]

In February 1961, Pirelli travelled to Tunisia to visit Algerian refugee camps for the very first time. As he had done for the partisans' letters, he became involved in an extensive project of collecting first-hand evidence, "convinced of the fact that only the Algerians were qualified to talk about their experience, which was quite separate, and *had to be kept separate*, from the experience of the French opponents to the war of Algiers".[82]

This conviction gave birth to two extraordinary works: in 1962, Pirelli published — together with Jacques Charby — a collection of stories and drawings by Algerian refugee children in Tunisia (published both in Italy and in France, by Einaudi and Maspero respectively).[83] This unique work has no equal except in the film *J'ai huit ans* [I am eight years old], directed by Yann le Masson in collaboration with René Vautier and Olga Baidar-Poliakof, shot in the same Tunisian camps and with the same drawings. The following year, an impressive volume of over seven hundred pages was published (again by Einaudi and Maspero). It was edited by Kessel and Pirelli, and the title of the Italian edition — printed on a cover with the colours of independent Algeria — was *Lettere della rivoluzione algerina* [Letters from the Algerian Revolution].[84] The reference to the aforementioned collections on the Resistance was not only a marketing trick: other than the fact that the context was different (this time the war was still in progress), the working method was identical. A simple sentence on the back cover explains the book's importance: "This book documents how, through countless tragedies and *individual* acts of heroism, a people has grasped self-awareness and a nation has been born." Once again, Pirelli focuses his attention on the real individuals who make history: "An element that all these documents share," we read in a sober note from the editors, "is their personal character. […] This criterion has led to the exclusion of those texts that, despite their testimonial value, seemed classifiable as journalistic or literary writings, or as texts belonging to a sphere that could be described as official."[85]

Pirelli's "partisan" attitude is the same as that which led him to conduct his research on the anti-fascist struggle at the end of the 1940s. In 1969, in

[81] Giovanni Pirelli, in Ettore A. Albertoni e al. (eds.), *La generazione degli anni difficili*, Bari, Laterza, 1962, pp. 201-202, republished in M. Scotti (ed.), *Giovanni Pirelli, intellettuale del Novecento*, cit., pp. 238-241.

[82] Cesare Bermani, *Giovanni Pirelli. Un autentico rivoluzionario*, Pistoia, Centro di documentazione, 2011, p. 30. Italics mine.

[83] *Les enfants d'Algérie: récits et dessins*, Paris, Maspero, 1962 (translated by Giovanni Pirelli, *Bambini d'Algeria*, Turin, Einaudi, 1962).

[84] *Le peuple algérien et la guerre. Lettres et témoignages, 1954-1962*, edited by Giovanni Pirelli and Patrick Kessel, Paris, Cahiers libres, 1962 (translated by Giovanni Pirelli, *Lettere della rivoluzione algerina*, Turin, Einaudi, 1963).

[85] *Lettere della rivoluzione algerina*, cit., p. xxxi.

a new foreword to an edition of the *Lettere dei condannati a morte della Resistenza europea* that was directed at students, he makes the following statement:

> Remember that the Resistance did not end with the defeat of Fascism. It continued, and it continues to fight against all that survives of that mentality, of those methods: against every system that gives a handful of people the power to decide for all. It continues in the struggle for real independence by people who are subject to colonialism, or imperialism. It continues in the fight against racism. In sum, as long as there are exploiters and exploited, oppressors and oppressed, people who have too much and people who starve to death, it will always be necessary to choose which side to be on.[86]

Conclusion: "If one day that hour returns"

In these transnational movements of people, ideas and practices that lie at the foundation of the New Left, the networks of anti-colonialist militants that started to emerge in support of the Algerians' struggle played a key role. Nevertheless, existing scholarship on these informal groups is still in an embryonic stage (when it is not entangled in memoirs), and remains confined to the protagonists of the two main French *réseaux*: one headed by the Sartrean philosopher Francis Jeanson, and one organised around the Egypt-born communist Henri Curiel.[87]

Apart from these (Parisian) intellectuals, the militants who were involved — to varying degrees — in the anti-colonialist networks remain mostly unknown: we know next to nothing of their relations with the Algerians and very little about their contacts with the other networks active in Belgium, Germany, Italy and Switzerland. What we do know is that many of the elder anti-colonialist militants had fought as partisans in the Resistance, like Francis Jeanson in France or Giovanni Pirelli in Italy.

[86] *Lettera a giovani che conosco e ad altri che non conosco*, in *Lettere della Resistenza europea*, edited by Giovanni Pirelli, ed. scol., Turin, Einaudi, 1969, pp. 8-9.

[87] See, for example, Nils Andersson, *Mémoire éclatée: de la décolonisation au déclin de l'Occident*, preface by Gérard Chaliand, Lausanne, Éditions d'en bas, 2016; Sarah Kaminsky, *Adolfo Kaminsky, une vie de faussaire*, Paris, Calmann-Lévy, 2009; Marie-Pierre Ulloa, *Francis Jeanson: A Dissident Intellectual From the French Resistance to the Algerian War*, Stanford, Calif., Stanford University Press, 2008; Jacques Charby, *Les porteurs d'espoir. Les réseaux de soutien au FLN pendant la guerre d'Algérie: les acteurs parlent*, Paris, La Découverte, 2004; Hervé Hamon, Patrick Rotman, *Les porteurs de valises. La résistance française à la guerre d'Algérie*, Paris, A. Michel, 1979. For the first in-depth analyses of Italy see: Guido Panvini, *Third Worldism in Italy*, in Stefan Berger, Christoph Cornelissen (eds.), *Marxist Historical Cultures and Social Movements during the Cold War*, Cham, Palgrave Macmillan, 2019, pp. 289-308; Tullio Ottolini, *Giovanni Pirelli e la guerra d'indipendenza algerina. Tra attivismo intellettuale e* soutien *concreto*, in M. Scotti (ed.), *Giovanni Pirelli, intellettuale del Novecento*, cit., pp. 85-110; Massimo de Giuseppe, *Il "Terzo Mondo" in Italia. Trasformazioni di un concetto tra opinione pubblica, azione politica e mobilitazione civile (1955-1980)*, "Ricerche di Storia Politica", 2011, n. 1, pp. 29-52.

Speaking at a 1967 rally for Vietnam in Florence, Franco Fortini — also a former partisan — said the following: "At the beginning, I asked myself what we were really talking about: and I know that we talked about Vietnam to the same extent that we talked about ourselves, about the violence we are subjected to and the violence we have to enact."[88] In this sense, anti-fascism was a shared ethos, all the stronger because it was understood not as a concluded historical event but as a "suspended delivery" (Parri) between one generation and another, that is, between the former partisans (born around the 1920s) and the "inexperienced younger brothers" (born around the 1940s). The example of the "elder partisan brothers" served to indicate what was to be done "if one day that hour returns". Fortini replicated: "[N]ot war, but guerrilla warfare." This indication acquires its full meaning when it is juxtaposed with Schmitt's *Theory of the Partisan*, where the status quo of the Cold War is disturbed by the eruption of decolonisation struggles. Fortini's slogan, then, marks the desired end of a cycle dominated first by interstate warfare, and then by the Pax Americana et Sovietica. For the militants of the New Left, the time had come to embrace "a revolutionary project that took the shape of a methodical preparation for civil war".[89] Based on the moral absolutisation of the enemy, the civil war of the global 1960s — a guerilla war with varying forms and degrees of intensity — found its role models in the "political" fighters of the anti-colonialist liberation struggles, as if they were new partisans.

[88] *Intervento alla manifestazione per la libertà del Vietnam*, in Franco Fortini, *Saggi ed epigrammi*, edited by Luca Lenzini, Milan, Mondadori, 2003, p. 1405. On this incident see also Francesca Socrate, *Sessantotto. Due generazioni*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 2018, pp. 37-45.

[89] E. Traverso, *A ferro e fuoco*, cit., p. 24.

The factory between economy, society and politics. The controversial history of the Taranto steelworks

Marco Doria*

The Taranto steelworks has held and continues to hold an important place in the history of Italian industrialisation. Consequently, it has been the object of numerous studies. This article examines a selection of recent publications on the Taranto steelworks and, more broadly, on the history of Italian state-owned companies and the IRI (Industrial Reconstruction Institute). The purpose is to reflect on the role of the steel industry in the Italian economy, on state-owned enterprises and their relationship with politics and on the policies pursued after the Second World War in order to reduce the gap between the North and the South. Finally, the article will discuss public debates on these topics. In doing so, it places the various decisions and the different positions on the issue in a historical context. In conclusion, the article identifies a number of questions that have yet to receive an appropriate answer.
Key words: State-owned enterprises, IRI (Industrial Reconstruction Institute), Steel industry, Taranto, Southern Italy, Development models

Throughout history, factories across the world have become representative of more general processes, repeatedly and rightfully ending up at the centre of public debate — even if the examples are not many. As far as contemporary Italy is concerned, the first case that springs to mind is the Fiat Mirafiori factory in Turin, a symbolic place of twentieth-century Italian industry.[1] In second position, we could place the Ilva factory of Taranto, inaugurated at the beginning of the 1960s; like the Mirafiori factory, it has been a "protagonist" of the golden age, the troubled 1970s and the subsequent decades of globalisation, and in recent years it has received even more attention than the Fiat factory. In 2019, for example, Salvatore Romeo devoted a rich and detailed book to the history of the Taranto factory.[2] Romeo looks at the rela-

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[1] See Giuseppe Berta, *Mirafiori*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1998, and Duccio Bigazzi, *La grande fabbrica. Organizzazione industriale e modello americano alla Fiat dal Lingotto a Mirafiori*, Milan, Feltrinelli, 2000.

[2] Salvatore Romeo, *L'acciaio in fumo. L'Ilva di Taranto dal 1945 a oggi*, Rome, Donzelli, 2019.

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tionship between the factory and the city, placing it in the context of the "long course of the Italian steel industry" and in no way neglecting other perspectives of analysis, such as those developed in the field of political history and those focusing on the extraordinary intervention in the South of Italy. In this article, I will return to the various themes that Romeo tackles by "turning the telescope upside down", that is, starting from more general issues to then arrive at Taranto and the steelworks: this different angle will enable me to focus on some of the basic problems of the history of contemporary Italy.

The steel industry in the world and in Italy: dynamics and figures

From a global perspective, the history of the steel industry does not take the curved shape of a parabola. Statistical data collected by the World Steel Association show a continuous and impressive growth in the global production of raw steel (i.e. steel that is subsequently subjected to various secondary processes to obtain different types of finished steel products): in 1950, 189 million tonnes were produced; 595 million in 1970; and 850 million in 2000. In 2018, the production of raw steel exceeded 1,808 million tonnes (China now produces 51.3% of global production and India follows at a distance with 106 million tonnes, having surpassed Japan and the United States).[3] The trend in steel production in Italy shows a different dynamic from that of the rest of the world; it resembles that of the countries whose industrialisation process has started long ago. In 1950, just over two million tonnes of steel were produced in Italy, much less than the production of French and West German steelworks in the same period (8.5 and 11.9 million tonnes, respectively).[4] In the following decades, the Italian steel industry underwent a remarkable catching-up process in comparison to other Western European steel industries, which had also grown: it produced 8.2 million tonnes of steel in 1960, 17.3 million in 1970 and 26.5 million in 1980. From the 1980s onwards, Italian production repeatedly and significantly fluctuated, remaining steadily above 20 million tonnes and reaching a peak of 31.5 million in 2006; only in 2009 production dropped to 19.9 million tonnes owing to the effects of the crisis, although these were soon overcome in terms of steel production, with 28 million tonnes being produced in 2011 and around twenty-four million in the years between 2016 and 2019.[5] Hence, in the context of a constant and increasingly marked growth

[3] World Steel Association, *World Steel in Figures*, Brussels, 2019.

[4] Gian Lupo Osti, *L'industria di stato dall'ascesa al degrado. Trent'anni nel gruppo Finsider. Conversazioni con Ruggiero Ranieri*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1993, p. 325.

[5] The World Steel Association (see *Steel Statistical Yearbook*, *sub anno*) offers a wealth of data on the production of raw steel and various finished steel products across the world and in individual countries, on the consumption and international trade of steel products and on the technologies adopted in the production process. On the Italian case during the second half of

in the global production and consumption of steel, the earliest industrialised countries have enjoyed a substantial consumption stability during the last few decades and succeeded in maintaining significant production levels, even if the produced volumes have seen relevant fluctuations.

Starting in the late nineteenth century, when Italy was still taking its first, difficult steps on the road towards industrial development, the Italian iron and steel industry was increasingly considered a strategic sector. Although not everyone agrees with this assessment, criticised in particular by exponents of economic liberalism, it seems to apply to the years of the First World War, when producing arms and ammunition — hence steel — was fundamental to winning the war. Not surprisingly, this orientation was confirmed in the 1930s, as Italy adopted an "autarkic" perspective with regard to the goal of steel self-sufficiency, although independence from imports of the required raw materials was not possible due to the country's limited natural resources. In the aftermath of the Second World War, the iron and steel issue remained in the foreground. The main protagonist of the debate and advocate of an organic development project for the sector was Oscar Sinigaglia, a manager of great value who regained the leadership of Finsider after being ousted from the top management of the public iron and steel industry following the approval of the racial laws. During the reconstruction years, the government's objective was to encourage the permanent affirmation of the Italian industry, the prerequisite for which was the presence of a modern and efficient iron and steel industry capable of adequately supporting the mechanical sector in an open and outward-looking economic system.[6] As we have seen, this policy has had good results, even if the sector experienced moments of crisis in the 1970s and 1980s only to find relative stability further ahead, in a far more turbulent context.

the twentieth century, see also the comprehensive and detailed essay by Margherita Balconi, *La siderurgia italiana (1945-1990). Tra controllo pubblico e incentivi del mercato*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1991.

[6] The seminal essay by Franco Bonelli, *Lo sviluppo di una grande impresa in Italia. La Terni dal 1884 al 1962*, Turin, Einaudi, 1975, which takes a business history approach by linking the history of Terni to the country's transformations, paved the way for numerous studies on the steel industry. These include a special issue of "Ricerche storiche", 1978, VIII, n. 1, January-April, *La siderurgia italiana dall'Unità a oggi* (Atti del convegno, Piombino, 30 September-2 October 1977); Franco Amatori, *Cicli produttivi, tecnologie, organizzazione del lavoro. La siderurgia a ciclo integrale dal piano "autarchico" alla fondazione dell'Italsider (1937-1961)*, "Ricerche storiche", 1980, X, n. 3, September-December, pp. 557-611; and Franco Bonelli (ed.), *Acciaio per l'industrializzazione. Contributi allo studio del problema siderurgico italiano*, Turin, Einaudi, 1982. For a history of the steel industry in the years following the Second World, see G.L. Osti, *L'industria di stato dall'ascesa al degrado. Trent'anni nel gruppo Finsider. Conversazioni con Ruggiero Ranieri*, cit., and M. Balconi, *La siderurgia italiana (1945-1990). Tra controllo pubblico e incentivi del mercato*, cit. Additionally, various relevant essays can be found in the *Storia dell'IRI* series published by Laterza, which I will cite in subsequent notes.

It is, then, perfectly legitimate to ask ourselves how strategic the Italian steel sector still is in the present, and a positive answer to this question seems reasonable and justified. After Germany, the Italian steel industry is the second largest in Europe (not taking into account Russia) and the tenth largest in the world; the net trade balance of steel products has been negative in the last four years, which shows that a significant level of internal consumption is not fully satisfied by national production. The European Commission has included steel among the "six strategic value chains", even if it has also warned that the technologies that are adopted in the production process can be heavily polluting. In this regard, though, it is worth emphasising that 80 per cent of Italian steel is produced using electric furnaces, a less polluting process than that using blast furnaces powered by fossil fuels. In 2017, the electric furnace accounted for 40 per cent of steel production in the countries of the European Union, as opposed to 25 per cent worldwide.[7]

Public enterprise and the steel industry

The Industrial Reconstruction Institute (Istituto per la Ricostruzione Industriale, hereafter IRI), along with its holding company Finsider and its operating companies, was responsible for the Taranto steelworks until the latter was privatised. This specific context, marked by obvious and very important interactions with politics, determined the project that led to the factory's construction. First Italsider, then Nuova Italsider and subsequently Ilva — without this succession of names changing the factory's public character in any way — controlled the plant and were responsible for its management from the beginning of the 1960s until the 1990s. The history of public enterprise, or state participation, thus emerges clearly when looking at the Taranto factory. Historiography has approached the subject of state-owned industry during different "cycles" that usually reflect the varying appreciation of the system of state-controlled companies in public opinion, due to the achieved economic results as well as the changing ideological and political mainstream. In post-war Italy, a debate unfolded on the fate of state-owned companies — unquestionably a legacy of the twenty-year Fascist period — that terminated with the inevitable acceptance of this legacy in a radically changed political context.[8] Subsequently, state-owned companies were increasingly regarded as an indispensable

[7] Lorenzo Sala, *Quanto è strategico il settore dell'acciaio?*, www.lavoce.info, 29 September 2019.

[8] Valerio Castronovo (ed.), *Storia dell'IRI 1. Dalle origini al dopoguerra 1933-1948*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 2012 (in particular Marco Doria, *I trasporti marittimi, la siderurgia*); Marco Doria, *Impresa pubblica e politiche industriali negli anni della ricostruzione*, "Il Politico", 2017, 3, pp. 237-255.

part of the country's economy and production system. The report that Pasquale Saraceno wrote in 1956 highlighted the structure, importance and even modernity of public enterprise. A decade later, in his preface to the Italian edition of Andrew Shonfield's successful book on modern capitalism, Saraceno himself recalled that "large part of the stimulus to expansion" that Western economies were experiencing "is determined by the activity carried out by public institutions", and this was also the case for Italy, to which the British scholar turns his attention. The IRI's good reputation at the time is well testified by the essay that Michael Posner and Stuart Woolf wrote in 1967 — published in Italy by Einaudi in the same year — with the explicit didactic intention of informing English readers.[9] In Italy, those were the glorious years of state-owned enterprises, which in the early 1970s reached the peak of their development though not in terms of employees and turnover, which were destined to grow in the decade that closed the golden age, but in terms of corporate efficiency and prestige. The most recent and well-documented studies on public enterprises in the twentieth century clearly underline the changes that have taken place since then, until their decisive downsizing and substantial liquidation at the end of the century.[10] Although the IRI has obviously been characterised by its link with politics ever since its birth in 1933, in the post-war period, in the 1950s and — to a lesser extent — in the following decade the Institute "enjoyed a reasonable degree of success in stemming external conditioning" and in elaborating its industrial and business strategies.[11] Public managers could take advantage of a sort of benign neglect granted by the De Gasperi and subsequent governments, also because of their undisputed competence and authority.[12]

The history of the IRI's steel industry is a good example of these more general dynamics. As is known, it was precisely within Finsider that the development plan for the sector — named after its main representative, Sinigaglia — took shape in the aftermath of the Second World War. In the 1950s, it was

[9] Ministero dell'Industria e del Commercio, *L'Istituto per la Ricostruzione Industriale - IRI, III. Origini, ordinamenti e attività svolta (rapporto del Prof. Pasquale Saraceno)*, Turin, UTET, 1956; Andrew Shonfield, *Il capitalismo moderno. Mutamenti nei rapporti tra potere pubblico e privato*, Milan, Etas Kompass, 1967 (the quotation from Saraceno is at p. XIII); Michael V. Posner, Stuart J. Woolf, *L'impresa pubblica nell'esperienza italiana*, Turin, Einaudi, 1967.

[10] Among the many essays published on this topic, it is worth mentioning Fabrizio Barca, Sandro Trento, *La parabola delle partecipazioni statali: una missione tradita*, in F. Barca (ed.), *Storia del capitalismo italiano dal dopoguerra a oggi*, Rome, Donzelli, 1997, pp. 185-236; Francesco Silva (ed.), *Storia dell'IRI 3. I difficili anni '70 e i tentativi di rilancio negli anni '80*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 2013; Roberto Artoni (ed.), *Storia dell'IRI 4. Crisi e privatizzazione*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 2013; and Pierluigi Ciocca, *Storia dell'IRI 6. L'IRI nell'economia italiana*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 2015. For a discussion of public enterprises from an international perspective, see Pier Angelo Toninelli (ed.), *The Rise and Fall of State-Owned Enterprises in the Western World*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000.

[11] P. Ciocca, *Storia dell'IRI 6. L'IRI nell'economia italiana*, cit., p. 178.

[12] F. Barca, S. Trento, *La parabola delle partecipazioni statali: una missione tradita*, cit., p. 194.

again Finsider's technicians who developed an industrial and corporate project for the first phase of investments that gave life to the Taranto plant, whose construction began in 1960 and was completed in 1964, when it was officially inaugurated. In the second half of the 1960s, pressure from the political system — already a determining factor in the decision to build the plant — made itself strongly felt, imposing progressive extensions and compromising the possibility of an economically efficient form of management. The largest steelworks in Italy — and certainly one of the largest in Europe — employed 7,041 direct workers in 1969 and 21,251 in 1979, and financed the activities of a vast world of contractors. In 1969, Taranto produced 2.7 million tonnes of steel and 2.3 million tonnes of cast iron; by 1979, production had risen to 7.5 million tonnes of steel and 7.2 million tonnes of cast iron.[13] These are considerable figures, despite being much lower than Finsider's forecasts a few years earlier. Nevertheless, Taranto — even if it was not the only Finsider plant with disastrous results — accumulated equally considerable losses that were eventually fatal for the company, for Finsider and for the IRI itself.

The decision taken at the end of the 1950s to build the plant and the suggestion to "double" it, proposed by the IRI's Technical advisory committee on the iron and steel industry in 1969 and endorsed by the government in 1970, have been long and bitterly debated. These events have certainly fuelled — and continue to fuel — a "public use of history" on themes such as the backwardness of the South, dedicated policies for its development, the interconnection of economy and politics, and the functioning (or malfunctioning) of public enterprise, on which I will make some considerations in this article. First, though, it is worth recalling some useful data to contextualise choices that also — and for some above all — represented industrial policies. In the second half of the 1950s, the rapid growth of the Italian economy was accompanied by a considerable expansion in the demand for steel, which was expected to increase significantly. The forecasts made at the time proved to be correct: in the following decade, both the production and consumption of steel grew considerably. This trend confirmed the anticipation of a further increase in demand, which would have had to be met without recourse to imports, particularly significant for flat-rolled products, thus increasing domestic production. However, the economic situation in the 1970s was very different from expectations: the sudden slowdown in growth and fiercer competition between companies at European and international level plunged the steel industry — that is, the steelworks in European countries — into a deep crisis. In 1980, the Euro-

[13] The employment data can be found in M. Balconi, *La siderurgia italiana (1945-1990). Tra controllo pubblico e incentivi del mercato*, cit., p. 302; the production figures were taken from Ruggiero Ranieri, Salvatore Romeo, *La siderurgia IRI dal piano Sinigaglia alla privatizzazione*, in Franco Russolillo (ed.), *Storia dell'IRI 5. Un gruppo singolare. Settori, bilanci, presenza nell'economia italiana*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 2014, p. 182.

pean Commission declared a state of "manifest crisis" in the sector and, based on the provisions of the Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), promoted a programme of restructuring and reducing the production capacity to counteract the fall in prices and recover business efficiency.[14] The solutions identified by the top management of the Italian public steel industry (i.e. the government and its Ministry of State Holdings, the IRI and Finsider) appeared weak, belated and utterly inadequate. Thus, having to resort to bank credit following huge investments without adequate capital, Italsider was weighed down by financial burdens but also affected by — often exacerbated — disputes with trade unions and a significant rise in labour costs that was not matched by productivity gains. Subsequently, it recorded heavy budget deficits and was saved from bankruptcy only thanks to repeated injections of public money.

By the 1980s, the idea that a systematic privatisation of public enterprises could be beneficial had not yet gained ground. Some years later, though, in the troubled two-year period of 1992-1993, the government decided to proceed rapidly along the road to privatisation; Ilva Laminati Piani, the company that controlled the Taranto plant, was sold to the Riva group in 1995.[15] Thus ended, at least momentarily, the long history of the public iron and steel industry in Italy. Pierluigi Ciocca, speaking more generally about the IRI, explicitly asked whether privatisation had been "a necessary route".[16] Looking at the context of the early 1990s from a historical perspective, the motivations that then led to such an outcome clearly emerge. In more recent times, the always controversial issue of public control of companies — including Ilva, given its recent vicissitudes — has returned to the centre of debate.

The history of the Taranto factory also offers interesting perspectives for analysing entrepreneurial history,[17] especially that of the public entrepreneurs

[14] For an analysis of the economic dynamics of the sector and a contextualisation of the various industrial policy strategies that have been adopted, see M. Balconi, *La siderurgia italiana (1945-1990). Tra controllo pubblico e incentivi del mercato*, cit., and Ruggiero Ranieri, Salvatore Romeo, *La siderurgia IRI dal piano Sinigaglia alla privatizzazione*, cit.. For an extensive discussion of the European and Italian steel industry, hence of the context in which the choices concerning Taranto were made, see S. Romeo, *L'acciaio in fumo. L'Ilva di Taranto dal 1945 a oggi*, cit., pp. 55-88 and 127-139.

[15] S. Romeo, *L'acciaio in fumo. L'Ilva di Taranto dal 1945 a oggi*, cit., pp. 197-207.

[16] P. Ciocca, *Storia dell'IRI 6. L'IRI nell'economia italiana*, cit., p. 264.

[17] In addition to works such as Paride Rugafiori's *I gruppi dirigenti della siderurgia "pubblica" tra gli anni Trenta e gli anni Sessanta*, in F. Bonelli (ed.), *Acciaio per l'industrializzazione. Contributi allo studio del problema siderurgico italiano*, cit., pp. 335-368, and Daniela Felisini's *Biografie di un gruppo dirigente (1945-1970)*, in Franco Amatori (ed.), *Storia dell'IRI 2. Il "miracolo" economico e il ruolo dell'IRI*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 2012, pp. 151-258, there are also valuable eyewitness accounts from important managers of the public iron and steel industry that offer an "insider" perspective on public management and, more generally, on the history of this industry and the IRI. Other than the aforementioned work by Gian Lupo Osti, see also Alessandro Fantoli, *Ricordi di un imprenditore pubblico*, Turin, Rosenberg & Sellier, 1995.

who, over the course of half a century, designed and managed the factory in a changing and never simple context. From the moment the Taranto project started to take shape, various actors from the IRI's and Finsider's top management accepted the challenge: on the one hand, the managers trained by Sinigaglia and accustomed to obeying an eminently technical and industrial logic; on the other hand, the executives of the state-owned holding system who were much more ready and willing to accept political indications.

As mentioned above, in 1995 Ilva Laminati Piani became part of the group that Emilio Riva had founded in the Lombardy region in the 1950s. Its story is emblematic of the vicissitudes of another steel industry and another Italy; after a brief start-up phase in which Riva's company traded scrap iron, during the economic boom it began producing electric furnace steel. Riva ran the company with a decisive attitude, showing a capacity to innovate and consolidate the company until it became one of those pocket-sized multinationals that represented the most dynamic face of Italian capitalism at the end of the century.[18] Riva adopted the same entrepreneurial style in the management of Taranto: he reduced the workforce, brought down the average age and selected the most "loyal" workers, whereas the trade unions were severely marginalised and an equally clear break was made with the inefficient world of suppliers that had weighed so heavily on the plant's balance sheet. In the spirit of Draghi's famous "whatever it takes", The strong focus on cost containment, or in Draghi's famous words, "whatever it takes", led the entrepreneur and his collaborators to neglect the investments needed to limit the heavy environmental pollution caused by full cycle processing. In 2012, the situation became explosive as magistrates seized the factory and Riva, along with other members of the family, were subjected to judicial investigations. In 2013, the Letta government put the company under special administration, after which its management returned to public hands. The subsequent Renzi government began searching for a new buyer; at the end of a very complex procedure, the proposal made by Arcelor Mittal was considered the best. An Indian group that had become a global steel giant, with 180,000 employees and producing 50 million tonnes of steel in four continents and 14 countries, in 2006 Mittal launched a successful takeover bid for Arcelor, heir to the great Franco-Luxembourg steel industry.[19] Once the agreement between Arcelor Mittal and the Italian government was signed, the criminal liability of the Taranto plant's managers for crimes against the environment largely related to the past became

[18] Margherita Balconi, *Riva 1954-1994*, Assago, Giampiero Casagrande editore, 1995. In 1994, the Riva group's 5,713 employees (2,740 in Italy) produced 5.7 million tonnes of steel.

[19] For a discussion of the developments of the Ilva plant from its privatisation until 2018, see S. Romeo, *L'acciaio in fumo. L'Ilva di Taranto dal 1945 a oggi*, cit., pp. 231-290; on Arcelor Mittal see Federico Rampini, *L'impero di Cindia*, Milan, Mondadori, 2006, pp. 58-65, and Roy Tirthankar, *A Business History of India. Enterprise and the Emergence of Capitalism from 1700*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2018, pp. 218, 231.

the object of discussions, whereas serious uncertainties persisted on the international steel market. Consequently, it is not possible to speak of a new season for the southern steelworks being fully under way. The potential and no longer questionable arrival of a large Indian multinational corporation that would mark the factory's definitive entry into the globalisation of the twenty-first century, along with the full return of public management or the dismantling of the plant, are all options — with very different values — to be considered for a history that has yet to be written.

Politics and the southern question

The case of the Taranto steelworks is truly emblematic of the political dimension of the IRI's history. In 1950, an inter-ministerial committee chaired by Ugo La Malfa tackled the issue of how state-controlled companies should be coordinated and what direction they should be given. A few years later, the issue was taken up again and with greater determination: the Christian Democrat party, no longer steered by De Gasperi and with Amintore Fanfani emerging as the new leader, clearly wanted to assert a more direct and incisive control by the government (and by the relative majority party) over state-owned enterprises. The law establishing the dedicated ministry, approved in December 1956 with a very large parliamentary majority, responded to this objective. The law explicitly defined the role of public enterprises as a tool of the government's economic policies, and this approach found new breath when the centre-left started governing in the 1960s, with attention being turned to economic planning.[20] It was precisely in those years that the idea of a new large steel plant to be built in Taranto emerged, a political choice that the IRI and Finsider were forced to accept by starting the construction of the new plant.[21] Next, the government insisted that the plant be "doubled", and in 1969 the IRI's technical advisory committee was invited to discuss potential ways of expanding the production capacity of steel; interestingly, the alternative solution to expand the existing steel plant of Piombino (in Tuscany) was discarded for purely polit-

[20] Franco Amatori, *Un profilo d'insieme: l'età dell'IRI*, and Fabio Lavista, *Dallo statuto del 1948 alla programmazione economica nazionale*, both in F. Amatori (ed.), *Storia dell'IRI 2. Il "miracolo" economico e il ruolo dell'IRI*, cit. (pp. 3-55 and 523-561 respectively).

[21] See Onofrio Bellifemine, *Una nuova politica per il Meridione. La nascita del quarto centro siderurgico di Taranto 1955-1960,* Bologna, Il Mulino, 2018; on the political dimension of the process leading to the establishment of the plant, see Matteo Pizzigallo*, Storia di una città e di una "fabbrica promessa": Taranto e la nascita del IV Centro Siderurgico (1956-1961)*, "Analisi storica", V, 1989, n. 12-13, pp. 60-129. The IRI's connections with politics are discussed in Luciano Segreto, *Crisi della "governance" e rapporti con la politica*, in Francesco Silva (ed.), *Storia dell'IRI 3. I difficili anni '70 e i tentativi di rilancio negli anni '80***,** cit., pp. 307-379.

ical reasons, supported by a certain confidence — destined to disappear shortly afterwards — in the advantages of large plants and economies of scale. Clearly, the choices relating to recruitment policies and negotiations with the variegated world of construction contractors are all political choices, as is the management of the long crisis in the sector. What prevailed was the will — shared by the majority of the government — to burden Italsider's budget and, in turn, that of Finsider, the IRI and the State with the huge costs of delayed (or failed) restructuring and the necessary reductions in the workforce.[22] The instruments — very costly for public finance — that made this possible were unemployment benefits and specific legislative measures that allowed tens of thousands of steelworkers to retire early on very advantageous terms.

In the post-war political debate, the southern question, the problem of the South's backwardness and the most appropriate strategies to overcome this obstacle took — or rather regained, after the twenty-year Fascist interval — a specific weight. Compared to the North, the southern regions' backwardness was evident if one considers both economic indicators and social aspects,[23] and it was not ignored by the republican ruling class. The development of a new southern policy was mainly developed within the Association for the Industrial Development of Southern Italy (Associazione per lo sviluppo industriale del Mezzogiorno, hereafter SVIMEZ). SVIMEZ was set up at the end of 1946 by the Minister for Industry, the Socialist Rodolfo Morandi, and people linked to the IRI such as Donato Menichella, Giuseppe Cenzato, Francesco Giordani and Pasquale Saraceno.[24] The SVIMEZ's contributions, which considered industrialisation an essential factor for the growth of the southern regions when promoted by co-ordinated public and private interventions, were not immediately transposed into the concrete policies that would soon be implemented by the Development Fund for Southern Italy. By the mid-1950s, the persistent North-South divide led to a rethinking of the direction followed until then. A

[22] In this regard, the statement that the Minister for State Holdings Clelio Darida made in 1985, when the need to reorganise the system of public enterprises had been pressing for some time, is exemplary. According to Darida, "in the projects this effort [to reorganise] is accompanied — and must continue to be so — by a precise commitment to limit restructuring operations and job cuts in surplus companies to the Centre-North as much as possible, safeguarding existing businesses in the South in full compliance with economic management" (Clelio Darida e al., *Rapporto sulle partecipazioni statali*, Rome, Edizioni Euroitalia, 1985, pp. 34-35).

[23] Emanuele Felice, *The Roots of a Dual Equilibrium: GDP, Productivity, and Structural Change in the Italian Regions in the Long Run (1871-2011)*, "European Review of Economic History, 2018, 23, pp. 499-528; Emanuele Felice, *I divari regionali in Italia sulla base degli indicatori sociali (1871-2001)*, "Rivista di politica economica", 2007, March-April, pp. 359-405.

[24] On the SVIMEZ see the recent works that, in turn, refer to a rich historiographical production by Augusto De Benedetti, *L'IRI e il Mezzogiorno. Una interpretazione*, in Franco Amatori (ed.), *Storia dell'IRI 2. Il "miracolo" economico e il ruolo dell'IRI*, cit., pp. 581-583, Augusto De Benedetti, *Lo sviluppo sospeso. Il Mezzogiorno e l'impresa pubblica 1948-1973*, Soveria Mannelli, Rubbettino, 2013, pp. 47-59, and Onofrio Bellifemine, *Una nuova politica per il Meridione. La nascita del quarto centro siderurgico di Taranto 1955-1960,* cit., pp. 17-23.

central figure in this change of perspective was Saraceno, "the ideologist of the IRI" — as Daniela Felisini defined him — and the catalyst of the SVIMEZ group; under the direction of Ezio Vanoni, Saraceno drew up the Employment and income development scheme in Italy between 1955 and 1964. In the 1950s and 1960s, Saraceno was an influential member of the technical advisory committees for the steel industry, vigorously supporting the decision to build the Taranto steelworks and then to "double it", providing "technical" justifications to back the political choices.[25]

Law 634 of 1957 (supported by a large majority and approved with the abstention of the Communists and Socialists) provided direct public support for the industrialisation of the South through different forms of concessions and incentives. A decisive rule was that which established a "minimum" percentage of investments — namely 60 per cent of new investments, to reach 40 per cent of total investments — that public enterprises had to make in the southern regions. There was, then, a strong conviction that the North-South divide could only be bridged through industrialisation and that it was especially up to public enterprise to do so. Authoritative economists pointed to industrialisation as the way forward, including Paul Rosenstein-Rodan, who participated in conferences promoted by the SVIMEZ, and Albert Hirschman, one of the greatest scholars of development economics and the appropriate strategies to overcome conditions of backwardness.[26] The fact that industrialisation was mainly to be supported by state-owned enterprises, a typical scenario in the Italian case, meant that massive investments in basic sectors had to be made and with the aim of building large-scale plants.

Shortly after — and as a result of — the 1957 law, the strategy focusing on poles of development emerged.[27] The speech Saraceno prepared for the inaugu-

[25] D. Felisini, *Biografie di un gruppo dirigente (1945-1970)*, cit., pp. 211-223; on Saraceno see also Silvia Bruzzi, *Impresa pubblica, sviluppo industriale e Mezzogiorno: l'attualità della lezione di Pasquale Saraceno*, Pavia, Università degli Studi di Pavia, 2011; Claudia Rotondi, *Paradigms for Structural Growth and Development in Italy: Pasquale Saraceno's Contribution to the Theory and Practice of Economic Policy*, "Structural Change and Economic Dynamics", 2019, Volume 51, pp. 361-370; and Alessandro A. Persico, *Steel for Development: Pasquale Saraceno and the Fourth Taranto Steelworks*, "The Journal of European Economic History", 2019, 3, pp. 75-112.

[26] Augusto De Benedetti, *L'IRI e il Mezzogiorno. Una interpretazione*, cit., pp. 614-628.

[27] Actions in this direction were taken already at the start of the twentieth century, thanks mainly to Nitti's influence at the time; in the Fascist era, there had been no lack of projects and experiences of industrialisation promoted from above (Rolf Petri, *La frontiera industriale. Territorio, grande industria e leggi speciali prima della Cassa per il Mezzogiorno*, Milan, FrancoAngeli, 1990). On the history of the poles of development in Italy in the second half of the twentieth century, see Elio Cerrito, *I poli di sviluppo nel Mezzogiorno. Per una prospettiva storica*, "Studi storici", 2010, anno 51, n. 3, pp. 691-797. Cerrito's essay, which contains an extensive bibliography, highlights how — alongside the Taranto plant — numerous other large-scale plants were built in the South on the initiative of public and private companies, including the Montecatini (subsequently Montedison) factory of Brindisi, Sincat in Siracusa, Anic in Gela,

ration of the Taranto factory exalted this strategy, emphasising its revolutionary — in Saraceno's opinion — impact.[28] Leaving aside the pompous tones, which were understandable given the event's highly political value and the importance of the factory being inaugurated, these ideas underpinned a policy that would be implemented and widely shared for nearly two decades. It wasn't until the 1970s that the image of the "islands of industrialisation" began to be overlapped by that of the "cathedrals in the desert", but the poles of development and the — increasingly contested — related model of industrialisation were still defended by its proponents and supporters.[29]

Not even the main opposition force to the centrist and centre-left governments, namely the Italian Communist Party, erected any barricades when the laws that initiated this policy were enacted. Still, fierce polemics characterise official documents and the speeches of the party's top leaders against the large monopoly groups and "state capitalism", whereas the interpretations provided by leaders such as Emilio Sereni and above all Giorgio Amendola — in line with Gramsci's reflections — stimulated a constant call for a more "holistic" vision of the southern question. In this perspective, emphasis was placed on the partiality of interventions considered incapable of fostering an overall transformation of society and the economy of the South.[30]

Alfasud in Pomigliano d'Arco, and the chemical and petrochemical plants in Sardegna. For a clear overview of this process in the context of Italy's more general economic development, see A. Graziani (ed.), *L'economia italiana dal 1945 a oggi*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1979 (in particular pp. 68-74) and A. Graziani, *Lo sviluppo dell'economia italiana. Dalla ricostruzione alla moneta europea*, Turin, Bollati Boringhieri, 1998.

[28] The steelworks "gives the theory as well as the practice of *meridionalismo* terms of reference and much broader possibilities than in the past"; "The formation of the poles of development is an essential tool" for the growth of the South, and "the centre of Taranto is, in this context, a truly revolutionary fact: indeed, it definitively breaks an economic equilibrium that had been stagnant for years." The quotation from Saraceno can be found in Augusto De Benedetti, *L'IRI e il Mezzogiorno. Una interpretazione*, cit., p. 628.

[29] Again in 1980, in an article entitled "Cathedrals in the desert?", published in the magazine *Nord e Sud*, Saraceno recalled how the public factories built in the South thanks to a strong national effort represent a large part of southern industry (Augusto De Benedetti, *L'IRI e il Mezzogiorno. Una interpretazione*, cit., p. 641). Also in 1980, in a discussion between Giuseppe Galasso (a distinguished historian and exponent of the Republican Party) and Gerardo Chiaromonte (an authoritative leader of the Italian Communist Party), the different evaluations — due obviously also to role playing — of the policy of extraordinary intervention and poles of development emerged clearly: while Galasso emphasised the positive, albeit partial, results of this policy, Chiaromonte pointed out the limits (Gerardo Chiaromonte, Giuseppe Galasso, *L'Italia dimezzata. Dibattito sulla questione meridionale*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 1980).

[30] On the occasion of the conferences organised in 1970 by the Gramsci Institute and the Communist Party's Centre for economic policy studies, Eugenio Peggio emphasised the seriousness of the southern issue, painting a bleak picture of the South. In the Communist's opinion, what determined the situation was the lack of a general agrarian reform, the inadequacies of the industrialisation process, and the growth of cities in which "the bureaucratic-clientelar power, revitalised by the expansion of state monopoly capitalism, […] prepares and facilitates the penetration of large national and foreign economic organisations" (Eugenio Peggio, *Capitalismo ital-*

However, as far as the specific case of Taranto is concerned, the differences in position of the various political forces were very blurred at a national level, despite the constraints imposed on them depending on whether they were in government or opposition; in local politics, there was unanimous support in Taranto for the construction and subsequent expansion of the steelworks. The game was played out — in close connection to the party's national leadership — by the leading exponents of the local branch of the Christian Democracy, head of the Taranto administration since 1956. In a city that, by the late 1950s, was experiencing difficult times, owing to the downsizing of the arsenal and the crisis of the shipyards, the birth of the steelworks was seen as a great opportunity to respond to the area's hunger for work and as a driver of growth. To give one example: in 1961, when the tube factory began its activities and the number of employees was still limited, Italsider received no less than 18,000 job applications.[31]

Conclusion: the factory, the city and the future

The impact of the construction and expansion of the Taranto steelworks was enormous. The growth of the urban population and incomes, the great gains of land rent, the emergence of lifestyles and consumption styles ever more similar to those of northern cities can largely be explained by the economic and social dynamics resulting from the very presence of the large factory.[32]

iano anni '70, Rome, Editori Riuniti, 1970; quotation at p. 106). Bruno Trentin, a Communist trade union leader who was alert to the modernising aspects of Italian society brought about by "neo-capitalism", also denounced the role of the large monopolies, whom he deemed responsible not so much for perpetuating backwardness as for intensifying the exploitation of the labour force (Bruno Trentin, *Da sfruttati a produttori. Lotte operaie e sviluppo capitalistico dal miracolo economico alla crisi*, Bari, De Donato, 1977; the book gathers important texts published in the 1960s and the 1970s). On Amendola's view on Italian economy, see Gianni Cervetti (ed.), *Giorgio Amendola. La politica economica e il capitalismo italiano*, Milan, Guerini e Associati, 2007; on his analysis of the South and its potential transformation, see Amedeo Lepore, *Il meridionalismo di Giorgio Amendola*, in *La famiglia Amendola. Una scelta di vita per l'Italia*, Turin, Cerabona, 2011, pp. 211-246.

[31] Matteo Pizzigallo*, Storia di una città e di una "fabbrica promessa": Taranto e la nascita del IV Centro Siderurgico (1956-1961)*, cit., p. 129. The local political dynamics are also discussed in Onofrio Bellifemine, *I cattolici e la nascita del centro siderurgico di Taranto: una città del Sud alla vigilia dell'industrializzazione (1956-1964)*, "Italia contemporanea", 2019, n. 289, pp. 72-96, and in S. Romeo, *L'acciaio in fumo. L'Ilva di Taranto dal 1945 a oggi*, cit. The latter pays special attention to the urban planning aspects connected with the creation of the steelworks. An interesting eyewitness account is that of Alessandro Fantoli, *Ricordi di un imprenditore pubblico* (Memories of a public entrepreneur), who is critical of the relations — also described by the above-mentioned scholars — between Taranto's curia and the Christian Democrat environment.

[32] Elio Cerrito, *I poli di sviluppo nel Mezzogiorno. Per una prospettiva storica*, cit., pp. 701-707.

These disruptive effects were perceived for a few decades, then diminished following the crisis in the steel sector and the consequent, forced decisions of company restructuring and cost containment, which progressively stressed that detachment between the community, on the one hand, and the factory, on the other, that also marked other iron and steel cities.[33] What never ceased, though, was the environmental pollution that the plant produced; the constant and heavy pollution attracted attention and aroused criticism as early as the 1970s, becoming less and less tolerable in subsequent decades. In more recent times, it has become a central theme in public debate.[34]

Over the years, several renowned journalists and opinion makers in Italy have written about the Taranto steelworks, inspired by the spirit of the times and their personal sensibilities, and capable of dealing very effectively with issues that have subsequently been explored in historical research. In 1963, Giorgio Bocca's discussion of the "factories in the South" recounted how the poles of development policy were in full swing. State intervention was "decisive and irreplaceable" because, in the South, "there is no real bourgeoisie capable of leading the industrial revolution but only bureaucratic and parasitic classes", and the "precarious equilibrium" in which they moved was challenged by industrialisation, "neither a duty nor a business, but a revolutionary necessity, that is, a necessity that might as well ignore economicistic calculations". Bocca, whose prose is by no means characterised by understatements, considered the choices that fell and were managed from above as inevitable, hence accepting the risk of the additional costs that Saraceno described as "improper burdens". In a 1965 article published in *Il Corriere della Sera*, which describes Taranto as a place "where industrialisation has fallen in the most violent way", Alberto Cavallari positively commented on the poles of development and stated that, since Italy had to produce more steel, building steelworks was the right thing to do. Unlike Bocca, he believed that a transformation of the ruling class was taking place in the South, with the old elite losing power to the advantage of the new one.[35] Conversely, Antonio Cederna

[33] See Annalisa Tonarelli, *Piombino: il lento declino di una città industriale*, "Meridiana. Rivista di storia e scienze sociali", 2016, n. 85, pp. 81-108, and on the case of Genoa, *Vivere a Ponente*, Milan, Vangelista, 1989.

[34] The essay by S. Romeo, *L'acciaio in fumo. L'Ilva di Taranto dal 1945 a oggi*, cit., offers well-documented and sharp reflections on the issue.

[35] Bocca's observations, taken from his reportages as a correspondent of *Il Giorno* during the economic miracle, have beene published in Giorgio Bocca, *La scoperta dell'Italia*, Bari, Laterza, 1963, pp. 373-379. In the same years, *Corriere della Sera* commissioned some of its leading journalists to tell readers about the changes in the different Italian regions: Cavallari dealt with Puglia, where Taranto is located (Indro Montanelli e al., *Italia sotto inchiesta. Corriere della Sera (1963-65)*, Florence, Sansoni, 1965, pp. 757-762). The transformation of the southern elite as a result of the modernisation from above that the South experienced during the golden age is also discussed in the concise text by Giuseppe Galasso, *Mezzogiorno e modernizzazione (1945-1975)*, in Luigi Graziano, Sidney Tarrow, *La crisi italiana*, Turin, Einaudi, 1979,

— writing in 1972, also in *Il Corriere della Sera* — described a "Taranto at the mercy of Italsider", "a city in disarray, a Manhattan of underdevelopment and illegal constructions". Severely condemning the poles of development policy while the "doubling" of the steelworks was underway, he rhetorically asked where "the benefits promised by industrialisation" had gone. Cederna therefore represented those who even then, in Taranto, critically reflected on the city's transformation and denounced its environmental and, therefore, social costs.[36] More than forty years later, Marco Revelli defined the Ilva plant "a monster that has devoured — not metaphorically but physically — the city" and "a factory of death", which after destroying olive trees has reaped human lives by polluting them.[37]

The widespread consensus that accompanied the birth of the Taranto steelworks seems to have given way to a frontal opposition. Yet, the big questions surrounding the history of the factory remain unanswered. What position can the steel industry hold in Italy? What model of development should the country follow? Does public enterprise still have a function? How can economic activity and environmental protection live in harmony? To answer these questions, and perhaps also to find the right solutions, one must pay a visit to Taranto.

pp. 329-352. The extent to which this phenomenon is marked by the osmosis between old and new power groups rather than by the replacement of one with another would merit a more in-depth consideration.

[36] Antonio Cederna, *Taranto in balia dell'Italsider*, "Il Corriere della Sera", 13 April 1972, and Antonio Cederna, *Taranto strangolata dal boom*, "Il Corriere della Sera", 18 April 1972; see also S. Romeo, *L'acciaio in fumo. L'Ilva di Taranto dal 1945 a oggi*, cit., pp. 137 and following pages.

[37] Marco Revelli, *Non ti riconosco. Un viaggio eretico nell'Italia che cambia*, Turin, Einaudi, 2016 (quotes on pp. 181 and 183).

Prison experiences and scales in history, between global paradigms and national contexts. Recent trends in historiography

Anthony Santilli*

The publications examined in this article form the basis of a discussion on the extent to which the most recent historiography on prison experiences — civilian internment, in particular — has engaged with the so-called global turn and, at the same time, with the theme of scales in history. Through an analysis of a number of indicators that are present in the three selected works, I argue that the most important progress in historiographical terms depends not so much on the choice between traditional binomial pairs (e.g. micro/macro, local/global), but on the recourse to a micro-sociological approach aimed at avoiding the reification of both categories of analysis and periodisations, thus adopting a perspective that is never static.
Key words: Historiography, Internment, Detention, Global history, Scale in history

Introduction

The historiography of prison experiences, as that of other topics, has recently started to engage with the so-called global turn and the closely related theme of scales in history. In recent years, the need to balance out the great binomial questions (e.g. macro/micro, local/global) has produced a number of theoretical proposals whose validity may perhaps be assessed only in a future moment, through constant empirical application.[1] The three publications under examina-

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[1] The most interesting recent contributions in this field include: Hans Medick, *Turning Global? Microhistory in Extension*, "Historische Anthropologie", 24, n. 2, 2016, pp. 241-252; Romain Bertrand, Guilllaume Calafat, *La microhistoire globale: affaire(s) à suivre*, *"Annales HSS"*, 73-1, 2018, pp. 3-18; Christian De Vito, Anne Gerritsen, *Micro-Spatial Histories of Labour: Towards a New Global History*, in C. De Vito, A. Gerritsen (eds.), *Micro-Spatial Histories of Global Labour*, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2018, pp. 1-28. In 2019, the journal *Past & Present* dedicated an entire supplement to the relationship between microhistory and global history, with some particularly interesting contributions by: John-Paul A. Ghobrial, *Introduction: Seeing the World like a Microhistorian*, "Past and Present", suppl. 114, 2019, pp. 1-22; Jan de Vries, *Playing with Scales: The Global and the Micro, the Macro and the Nano*,

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tion here have been selected because they are emblematic of some of the most significant responses offered in the field of the history of prison practices, in particular that of civilian internment. They will allow me to reflect on the limitations and strengths of the presented — collective or individual — research.

The first essay that I will examine is *Mussolini's Camps. Civilian Internment in Fascist Italy 1940-1943* by Carlo Spartaco Capogreco,[2] an updated translation of what is nowadays considered a milestone in the historiography on Fascist civilian internment in the years between 1940 and 1943. Published by Einaudi in 2004 and first translated in Croatian and Slovenian,[3] the English version came out in 2019 as part of a new Routledge series on *Studies in the Modern History of Italy*, instantly receiving wide international attention.[4] In an attempt to better understand a highly specific period as that of 1940-1943, the author reconstructs previous prison practices that circulated in the Italian peninsula from the second half of the nineteenth century onwards.

By contrast, Matthew Stibbe's essay, titled *Civilian internment during the First World War. A European and Global History, 1914-1920*,[5] focuses on the global dimension of internment during an equally crucial era: the Greater War.[6] Here, the focal length seems to increase while the shutter speed slows down, to use a metaphor dear to Jacques Revel.[7] Having published a number of important essays and monographs on the theme of internment in the past,[8] Stibbe decided to focus on its global dimension in

"Past and Present", suppl. 114, 2019, pp. 23-36; Christian De Vito, *History without Scale: the micro-spatial perspective*, "Past and Present", suppl. 114, 2019, pp. 348-372.

[2] Carlo Spartaco Capogreco, *Mussolini's Camps. Civilian Internment in Fascist Italy 1940-1943*, New York, Routledge, 2019.

[3] C.S. Capogreco, *Mussolinijevi Logori*, Zagreb, Golden Marketing - Tehnič̆ka knjiga, 2007; C. S. Capogreco, Fašistič̆na taborišč̆a, Ljubljana: Publicistič̆no društvo ZAK, 2011.

[4] A case in point is the discussion of the book in February 2020, at the Centro Primo Levi and the Casa Italiana of New York, in the presence of the author as well as of Prof. Mary Gibson (CUNY Graduate Center-John Jay College of Criminal Justice), Prof. Silvana Patriarca (Fordham University) and Prof. Rudolf Mràzek (University of Michigan).

[5] Matthew Stibbe, *Civilian internment during the First World War. A European and Global History, 1914-1920*, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2019.

[6] On the distinctive features of the Greater War paradigm with respect to the traditional periodisation of the First World War see, in particular: Robert Gerwarth, Erez Manela (eds.), *Empires at War: 1911-1923*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2014. For an overview of national historiographies of the Great War, see Christoph Cornelissen, Arndt Weinrich (eds.), *Writing the Great War. The Historiography of World War I from 1918 to the Present*, New York-Oxford, Berghahn, 2021.

[7] Jacques Revel, *Micro-analyse et construction du social*, in J. Revel (ed.), *Jeux d'échelles: la micro-analyse à l'expérience*, Paris, Gallimard-Le Seuil, 1996, p. 19.

[8] See, among others: Matthew Stibbe, *Civilian Internment and Civilian Internees in Europe, 1914-20*, "Immigrants & Minorities", 26.1-2, 2008, pp. 49-81; Matthew Stibbe, *British Civilian Internees in Germany: The Ruhleben Camp, 1914-18*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2008; Matthew Stibbe, *Enemy Aliens, Deportees, Refugees: Internment Practices in the Habsburg Empire, 1914-1918*, "Journal of Modern European History", 12-4, 2014, pp. 479-499.

another, equally important work, again published in 2019 and co-edited with Stefan Manz and Panikos Panayi, in which each chapter is dedicated to a specific country or empire.[9]

Finally, the volume edited by Clare Anderson, *A Global History of Convicts and Penal Colonies*,[10] reconstructs events linked to the history of penal colonies, convict transportation and forced labour, drawing on a chronologically and geographically very broad range of case studies — from the Portuguese invasion of North Africa in 1415 to the dissolution of Stalin's gulags at the end of the 1950s. In this work, which presents the research outputs of an ERC Starting Grant, *The Carceral Arcipelago*, the shutter speed is prolonged and the focal length increased so as to find connections, similarities and discordances between spaces and practices that are worlds apart. In this case, the global perspective becomes a heuristic tool to understand a phenomenon whose contours are blurred by its complexity. Civilian internment is discussed in an analysis of the European case, co-authored by the historians Mary Gibson and Ilaria Poerio; along with the theoretical observations presented in Anderson's introduction, this chapter will be the main focus of my attention.

In these publications, the history of internment emerges in all its dimensions, whether the focus is on an individual case study, that is, the product of a purely internal evolution (Capogreco), on the variability of interconnected patterns during the specific historical moment of the Great War (Stibbe), or on a wider framework in which stable and mobile prison practices come together in a long-term perspective (Anderson). In sum, all texts offer essentially divergent analyses when considered from a scalar point of view. Is it possible to compare them in order to understand their real effectiveness in heuristic terms?

Already in 1996, Maurizio Gribaudi clearly stated that, from a historiographical perspective, it is useless to oppose the different scalar perspectives to one another. For him, it made much more sense to understand the type of analytical approach, that is, "les modalités différentes de la formalisation causale des phénomènes sociaux et des évolutions historiques".[11] Drawing on this specific criterion, Gribaudi argued that there are two different, even "incompatible" analytical models: a "macro-sociological" model (*approche macro-sociologique*), which implicitly acknowledges the existence of causal

[9] Stefan Manz, Panikos Panayi, Matthew Stibbe (eds.), *Internment during the First World War: A Mass Global Phenomenon*, New York-Oxon, Routledge, 2019. As Richard Drayton and David Motadel have rightly observed, global history does not shy away from analysing historical experiences of internment on a national scale. Richard Drayton, David Motadel, *Discussion: The Futures of Global History*, "Journal of Global History", 13, 2018, pp. 2-3.

[10] Clare Anderson (ed.), *A Global History of Convicts and Penal Colonies*, London-New York, Bloomsbury, 2018.

[11] Maurizio Gribaudi, *Echelle, pertinence, configuration*, in Revel, Jacques (ed.), *Jeux d'échelles: la micro-analyse à l'expérience*, Paris, Gallimard-Le Seuil, 1996, pp. 113-114.

hierarchies, inevitably forcing the scholar to search for the logical hierarchies that link individual actors to the macro-structural phenomena that he wishes to analyse; and a "micro-sociological" model, which rejects the idea of pre-existing causal hierarchies, rather seeking to reconstruct these hierarchies in the study of the interactions between individuals themselves. While the former reflects a deductive approach, in that it describes its empirical evidence on the basis of a predetermined global model, the latter is inductive, meaning that the causal construction is not anticipated but reconstructed through the sources of the object of study.

The macro-sociological approach seems the most suitable approach for a global history perspective, especially when we are dealing with that "broad brushstroke history of multi-secular change" that is written "with the foot on the accelerator", which predominantly uses secondary sources so as to construct narratives focused mainly on the great turning points and transformations of the past.[12] In reality, this association conceals an underlying confusion that Christian De Vito has explained in recent years. Picking up and further developing Gribaudi's paradigm, De Vito in fact stresses how the distinction between micro- and macroanalytical levels "illegitimately overlaps" with the geographical scope of the research (local/global), to the extent that it "postulates the division of tasks between a macroanalytical level capable of grasping the structures and a microanalytical level aimed at understanding the agency".[13]

Hence, regardless of the applied scale, there is an important gap between these demonstrative discourses, and to understand which of these approaches has been used in the texts under examination here is not a speculative exercise with an end in itself. On the contrary, it allows me to reflect on the most recent historiography on prison practices, in particular that on civilian internment, and on its openness to the wider debate on the relationship between the global paradigm and national histories. In order to do his, I will analyse the three texts by focusing on a number of indicators that may help us to understand the adopted approach.

[12] Francesca Trivellato, *Microstoria, storia del mondo e storia globale*, in Paola Lanaro (ed.), *Microstoria: a venticinque anni da L'eredità immateriale*, Milan, FrancoAngeli, 2011, pp. 122-123.

[13] Starting from this assumption, De Vito seeks to elaborate an epistemological paradigm in which the microhistorical approach is linked to the global through a renewed attention to spatial elements. This is what De Vito calls "microstoria translocale", which he translates as micro-spatial history, focusing mainly on labour history. Christian G. De Vito, *Verso una microstoria translocale (micro-spatial history)*, "Quaderni storici. Rivista quadrimestrale", 3/2015, p. 816; Christian De Vito, Anne Gerritsen, *Micro-Spatial Histories of Labour: Towards a New Global History*, in C. De Vito, A. Gerritsen (eds.), *Micro-Spatial Histories of Global Labour*, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2018, pp. 1-28.

Between the national and the global: new grammars for the study of the prison dimension

Anderson's study mainly focuses on the convict flows in a global context (Global Convict Flows). Such a broad categorisation — on which I will come back in the next section — aims to include the following: forced movement of convicts within the Western empires between 1415 and 1953 (i.e. from the use of convicts by the Portuguese empire in order to conquer the Moroccan *presidio* of Ceuta in North Africa until the closure of Europe's last penal colony, French Guiana); the penal labour camps and colonies that existed in Western Europe between 1750 and 1950; convict transportation, exile and collective resettlements in Imperial Russia and, subsequently, the Soviet Union. The co-existence of detention methods linked to mobility and other punitive measures and forms of forced labour is one of the most important novelties of this study, in which a desire emerges to write a new history of punishment that avoids separating deportation from imprisonment, in the words of two of the contributors to the volume, Sarah Badcock and Judith Pallot.[14]

In this case, the global dimension not only implies a geographical widening of the space of observation, but also the search for syncretic paradigms that allow us to discover new harmonies in the history of punishment. By focusing on convict transportation, the research group led by Anderson engages with the historiography of migrations and forced mobility, and with the more traditional historiography of prison systems, forced labour, prison experiences and internment. This tendency also characterised earlier works by Anderson and reached its full scientific maturity in *The Carceral Arcipelago* project.[15] Punishment gradually becomes a central element not only in the historiography of crime and prison systems, but also in colonial and postcolonial history, as well as in the construction and deconstruction of the great empires.[16] The latter perspec-

[14] Sarah Badcock, Judith Pallot, *Russia and the Soviet Union from the Nineteenth to the Twenty-First Century*, in Clare Anderson (ed.), *A Global History of Convicts and Penal Colonies*, London-New York, Bloomsbury, 2018, pp. 298-300.

[15] In a co-authored article published a few years earlier, Anderson had already written the following: "We argue that across various global regions convict transportation can be located within complex webs of punishment, space and place." Clare Anderson e al., *Locating Penal Transportation: Punishment, Space and Place c. 1750-1900*, in Dominique Moran, Karen Morin (eds.), *Historical Geographies of Prisons: Unlocking the Usable Carceral Past*, New York, Routledge, 2015, p. 148. For an empirical application of this perspective, see: Clare Anderson, *Transnational Histories of Penal Transportation: Punishment, Labour and Governance in the British Imperial World, 1788-1939*, "Australian Historical Studies", n. 47-3, 2016, pp. 381-39.

[16] C. Anderson, *Introduction: A Global History of Convicts and Penal Colonies*, cit., pp. 9-10. Again, it is worth mentioning another previous publication by Anderson, where she examined the relationship between different regions of the British Empire with regard to the history of convict transportation and punishment: Clare Anderson, *Convicts, Carcerality and Cape Colony Connections in the 19th Century*, "Journal of Southern African Studies", n. 42-3, 2016, pp. 429-442.

tive links the history of punishment to the development of global capitalism through completely new holistic aspects; this reveals a substantial continuity with what Ann Laura Stoler has coined a "carceral archipelago of empire", drawing on and expanding Foucauld's concept of "archipel carcéral".[17]

This semantic broadening considers the forced mobility of prisoners as a social product, part of a broader phenomenology of punishment where each experience has a specific position that depends, among other things, on the level of deprivation it is subjected to ("degrees of unfreedom").[18] In this new epistemological grammar, the *global* character therefore resides in: 1) the re-evaluation of convict mobility as a structural element of the history of punishment, especially in a period — namely that between the end of the eighteenth century and the nineteenth century -usually perceived as being dominated exclusively by the "stability" of the new prison system that was gradually taking shape; 2) the attempt by all contributors to identify "common patterns and themes" from a chronologically and geographically "broadened" perspective; 3) a relationship between the global and the local, where *local* refers to a perspective that investigates the political choices made by different empires or nations. A microscale, which includes smaller perspective frameworks as opposed to the national context, does not seem to be a major factor.[19]

In line with Anderson's suggestion that we should broaden our outlook to find connections that have thus far received little scholarly attention, Stibbe places civilian internment within the broader spectrum of practices aimed at controlling those individuals who are present on the national territory and considered hostile by central authorities. In this case, the perception of dangerousness is one of the criteria through which to extend the analysis to other measures, such as transportation, repatriation, confiscation of property, and social and economic marginalisation.[20]

This common tendency to develop a broader viewpoint reveals two different perceptions of the global paradigm. For Anderson, the construction of a global view is necessary to find common patterns, permanent features and moments of rupture, even in a diachronic perspective — as far as possible — that spans

[17] In 1975, Michel Foucault wrote the following on the matter: "[L]'archipel carcéral, lui, transporte cette technique [pénitentiaire N.d.R.] de l'institution pénale au corps social tout entier." Michel Foucault, *Surveiller et punir. Naissance de la prison,* Paris, Gallimard, 1975, p. 305. On the concept of *Carceral Archipelago of Empire*, see : Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain. Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Commonsense*, Princeton-Oxford, Princeton University Press, 2009, pp. 130-139. It is no coincidence that Stoler herself wrote an epilogue to Anderson's volume: Ann Laura Stoler, *Epilogue. In Carceral Motion: Disposal of Life and Labour*, in C. Anderson (ed.), *A Global History of Convicts and Penal Colonies*, cit., pp. 371-379.

[18] A.L. Stoler, *Epilogue*, cit., p. 375.

[19] C. Anderson, *Introduction: A Global History of Convicts and Penal Colonies*, cit., pp. 9-11.

[20] This analytical necessity is described even more clearly in: S. Manz, P. Panayi, M. Stibbe, *Internment during the First World War: A Mass Global Phenomenon*, in S. Manz, P. Panayi, M. Stibbe (eds.), *Internment during the First World War*, cit., pp. 1-18.

a period of about five centuries. A similar research is possible only through a team effort, involving various experts of area studies. In contrast to this search for patterns, Stibbe proposes an investigation into connections. Here, the adoption of a global perspective is understood as the search for growing, often asymmetrical, interactions that emerge at a global level, with Europe being only one among many actors. These interactions appear to be multiple and diverse, thanks also to the analysed period: the First World War, considered an important watershed in the history of internment.[21] If it is true that the global character of internment was already visible in some colonial enterprises from the end of the nineteenth century onwards, such a massive co-existence of practices did not occur until during the Great War. The object of analysis is therefore the synchrony of different concentration models.[22] This "global but not totalising" perspective,[23] to use an expression by Caroline Douki and Philippe Minard, is typical of connected history, so attentive to the reconstruction of often ignored relationships and transferences. We are not dealing with the same battle that Sanjay Subrahmanyam waged against other versions of global history, but with a heuristic recomposition of the global, where new actors join those traditionally studied in order to produce a more complex picture of wartime civilian internment.[24] Although Stibbe does not mean to minimise the importance of the national framework, at the same time he relativises its significance by studying non-state agents, such as the International Red Cross or prominent individual activists who affect the impermeability of borders as they move between nations and empires.[25] The resulting, broad and unlimited international scenario highlights the importance of the transnational (or cross-border) turn for his research.[26]

[21] On the discontinuities in prison practices between what happened before and during the First World War, see: Tammy M. Proctor, *Civilians in a World at War, 1914-1918*, New York, New York University Press, 2010, pp. 203-238. Some interesting historiographical interpretations of these differences emerge from the analyses of internment in the interwar period in: Panikos Panayi, *Prisoners of Britain: German civilian and combatant internees during the First World War*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2012, pp. 3-7.

[22] Stibbe already made a reference to the co-existence of different internment models during the First World War in an article on the Habsburg Empire: Matthew Stibbe, *Enemy Aliens, Deportees, Refugees: Internment Practices in the Habsburg Empire, 1914-1918*, "Journal of Modern European History", 12-4, 2014, p. 496. Daniela Caglioti confirms this idea of differentiation in her analysis of the Italian case in: Daniela L. Caglioti, *Enemy Aliens and Colonial Subjects: Confinement and Internment in Italy, 1911-19*, in S. Manz, P. Panayi, M. Stibbe (eds.), *Internment during the First World War*, cit., p. 127.

[23] Caroline Douki, Philippe Minard, *Histoire globale, histoires connectées: un changement d'échelle historiographique?*, "Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine", 54 bis, 2007/5, p. 19.

[24] See, for example, S. Subrahmanyam, *Historicizing the Global, or Labouring for Invention?*, cit., pp. 329-334.

[25] See, in particular, chapter 5 on the relationship between internment and international activism: M. Stibbe, *Civilian internment during the First World War*, cit., pp. 183-238.

[26] M. Stibbe, *Civilian internment during the First World War*, cit., pp. 4-5. In this respect, there are some interesting similarities with Patricia Clavin, *Time, Manner, Place: Writing*

This reconfiguration of the national paradigm, so free from any kind of methodological nationalism,[27] also emerges in Capogreco's essay. The latter was published at a time when historians focused on the complex relationship between history and memory, a tendency that also affected the question of what distinguished Italy from Germany in terms of concentration practices.[28] Capogreco's modus operandi involves a specific investigation of these practices in order to spot any transformations and peculiarities as opposed to other European realities, but without turning the nation-state into an absolute frame of reference.

His approach to sources is consistent with this perspective of investigation. It is not the "found" documentary sources that decide when and how the research should be carried out; the author starts from the historiographical question to then go out and gather information from the different archival systems that reflect our contemporary national borders. This reconstruction process takes him to Serbian, Croatian and Slovenian archives, in search of "new codes of recognition", as Stoler wrote a few years later.[29]

For this reason, Capogreco addresses all Slavic populations that were imprisoned by the Italian government, not limiting himself to those residing in the north-eastern region, but also extending his viewpoint to the so-called "parallel internment" implemented by the Italian Royal Army through the establishment of camps in the Yugoslav regions that were occupied in 1941. He traces differences with the internment managed directly by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and similarities with colonial internment in the Libyan region, especially in the projects of Graziani and Badoglio in Sirte.[30]

Modern European History in Global, Transnational and International Contexts, "European History Quarterly", 40-4, 2010, pp. 624-640.

[27] The term "methodological nationalism", coined by Andreas Wilmer and Nina Schiller with particular reference to migration studies, indicates the process of "naturalising" the national paradigm in the social sciences and its consequences in terms of historiographical production. Andreas Wimmer, Nina G. Schiller, *Methodological Nationalism, the Social Sciences, and the Study of Migration: An Essay in Historical Epistemology*, "International Migration Review", v. 37, n. 3, 2003, pp. 576-610.

[28] On the relationship between history and memory, it is impossible not to mention Filippo Focardi, *Il passato conteso. Transizione politica e guerra della memoria in Italia dalla crisi della prima Repubblica alla fine dei governi Berlusconi*, in F. Focardi, *Nel cantiere della memoria. Fascismo, Resistenza, Shoah, Foibe*, Rome, Viella, 2020, pp. 195-234 [initially published in Filippo Focardi, Bruno Groppo (eds.), *L'Europa e le sue memorie. Politiche e culture del ricordo dopo il 1989*, Rome 2013, pp. 51-90]. On the specific case of the relationship between Italy and Germany, see: Filippo Focardi, *Il cattivo tedesco e il bravo italiano: la rimozione delle colpe della seconda guerra mondiale*, Rome, Laterza, 2013.

[29] See, in particular, the chapter titled "The Pulse of the Archive" in: A.L. Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain*, cit., pp. 17-53.

[30] C.S. Capogreco, *Mussolini's Camps*, cit., pp. 112 sgg.

The question of categories

The question of categories of analysis necessarily calls attention to the relationship between scientific research and the collected empirical data. From a macroanalytical point of view, the selection, classification and categorisation of phenomena must be functional to the interpretative model that has been adopted in advance. The empirical data essentially represent no more than examples that are illustrative of how the macro works and is implemented. This implies an adaptation of the fact to the model by radically reducing the complexity of reality.[31] In a microanalytical approach, instead, the categories emerge from an empirical research on the sources. In other words, they are not predetermined, and neither are their contextual use and evolution over time. Consequently, the categories reflect the constant variability of causal configurations.[32]

In his study on civilian internment in Italy, Capogreco almost obsessively seeks to find an order in the different forms of internment that come to overlap during the Second World War.[33] Thus he distinguishes between civilian, military and "parallel" internment, followed by the Slavic question, but he also expresses the need to differentiate between exiles and prisoners, especially when they all end up in the same detention spaces. The desire to construct categorical tools that perfectly fit the situations in which they originated urge him to find solutions to problems of terminological nature that are perhaps still unresolved at present — if not in the world of academic research at large, then at least in the field of collective memory. To give one example: the author's attempt to clarify the difference between labour camps, internment camps and concentration camps.[34]

The same attention to categories is present in Stibbe's work. In addition to making the necessary distinction between the various types of internment, the author offers a more elaborate description of the category of "convict": by deconstructing the stereotypical image of the white, male, European convict, Stibbe demonstrates that the practice was also extended to women, the elderly and children.[35] His wide-ranging analysis furthermore allows him to highlight

[31] M. Gribaudi, *Echelle, pertinence, configuration*, cit., p. 128.

[32] M. Gribaudi, *Echelle, pertinence, configuration*, cit., pp. 114-115.

[33] I am drawing precisely on Gribaudi in my analysis of the great attention that the promoters of a microanalytical perspective pay to context. M. Gribaudi, *Echelle, pertinence, configuration*, cit., pp. 120-121.

[34] C.S. Capogreco, *Mussolini's Camps*, cit., pp. 50-51, 80-82. It is worth noting the author's effort to integrate himself into a broader process of categorisation. Thus, he explicitly adopts the categorisation that Simonetta Carolini formulated in reference to imprisoned political opponents: Simonetta Carolini, *Pericolosi nelle contingenze belliche: gli internati dal 1940 al 1943*, Rome, ANPPIA, 1987.

[35] On the difference between civilian and military internment, for example, he stresses the importance of the point of view adopted at the time: categorisation is necessary if it manages to faithfully reproduce the variety of experiences. M. Stibbe, *Civilian internment during the First World War*, cit., pp. 13-14.

the interethnic character of the interned population, thanks to a reading of the sources that goes beyond the simplistic study of the legal status of prisoners. A good example is that of the internment — by German and Austro-Hungarian forces — of black or Asian civilians with the nationality of one of the Allied countries: think of British seafarers from Liberia, Sierra Leone, the Yemeni territories and India, who were imprisoned in the same way as "white" citizens in the German camps. Stibbe's in-depth analysis of contexts and experiences allows him to explore the interreligious nature of the imprisoned population and its impact on the convicts' daily life in the camps, for instance by studying their different dietary needs. Their "allogeneic" character even becomes an element of political exploitation, as in the case of the propaganda used by German authorities in the Wünsdorf camp, near Zossen, specifically dedicated to the imprisoned Muslim population.[36]

The need to appropriately categorise the various phenomena becomes ever more problematic if we widen the field of observation. Anderson clearly states that, within the timeframe chosen for her research project, the broad range of locations to be included in the category of penal colonies is so wide as to make the term a "misnomer", also because those same places could change radically over time, and a clear definition is not able to explain such transformations.[37] Clearly, we must find suitable terms to distinguish different articulations of the same macro phenomenon, or at least to constantly clarify how these terms are understood.

In Gibson and Poerio's discussion of the European context, the main difference between penal colonies and other imperial contexts lies in the fact that they are "internal" to their respective national territories. In their attempt to discover the "roots" of twentieth-century penal colonies, the authors trace these back to the establishment, in modern times, of the first forced labour camps to replace the rowing of galleys as a punishment. They next analyse the penal colonies' transformations, highlighting their ability to adapt to different times and places — a flexibility that raises major definitional problems.[38] After all, as Stoler observes, it is the very category of colony — including that of the penal colony — that is intrinsically linked to a precariousness in space and

[36] M. Stibbe, *Civilian internment during the First World War*, cit., pp. 31-33 e 50-51.

[37] This difficulty to find an appropriate definition even regards the all-encompassing category of "convict", which the author considers to be equally "problematic". C. Anderson, *Introduction: A Global History of Convicts and Penal Colonies*, cit., pp. 12-13 and 15.

[38] "The longevity of the penal colony depended on its adaptability to different purposes and its shifting valence in public discourse. The flexibility of the penal colony and its employment in different national guises throughout Europe raises the problem of definition. Identification is easier in the imperial context, where all discrete sites outside the metropole in the modern era potentially qualify as penal colonies." Mary Gibson, Ilaria Poerio, *Modern Europe, 1750*-1950, in C. Anderson (ed.), *A Global History of Convicts and Penal Colonies*, cit., p. 338.

time.[39] The authors seek to overcome this instability by creating categories for the characteristics that the penal colonies maintained, over time, in the Old Continent: located mainly in rural areas, with dormitories that were substantially different from traditional prisons (also from an architectural point of view), inhabited by people who had already appeared before a judge or were simply held in preventive detention and, finally, who had usually been forced into labour so as to maximise the profit of the central authorities. This attempt at creating a model never results in a "macro-sociological rhetoric", that is, the temptation — well-argued by Gribaudi — to match the empirical data with broader, general interpretative models. On the contrary, as Sandra Curtis Comstock suggests, we are confronted with a strong tendency to express the fluid and historically defined nature of the category through a description of the social functions expressed at any given time.[40] This attention to empirical data is also reflected in the conceptualisation of the genealogy of historical processes, by adopting specific causal and spatial-temporal patterns.

Genealogies, historical temporality and the issue of space

In the specific case of internment, all authors under examination here agree on the importance of the First World War as a watershed. Stibbe draws our attention to the innovations that made it possible and economically viable to control a growing number of people (invention of barbed wire), to feed them for longer periods (development of high calorie canned foods), and to move them more easily even to remote regions (development of railways and steamships). This allowed a massive use of internment during the Great War, differently from what had happened not only in previous conflicts in Europe — as during the Franco-Prussian war, which had nevertheless shown important signs of breaking with the past — but also in previous colonial adventures.[41] From this genealogical perspective, the new power relations are shown to play a decisive role in the adoption of large-scale internment.

[39] "[T]he colony (the penal colony, the military colony, […]) is marked by the instability of both its morphology and the political mandates to which its architects and agents subscribe." Ann Laura Stoler, *Colony*, in John M. Bernstein, Adi Ophir, Ann Laura Stoler (eds.), *Political Concepts: A Critical Lexicon*, New York, Fordham University Press, 2018, p. 47.

[40] For more details on this idea of "incorporating comparisons" see: Sandra Curtis Comstock, *Incorporating Comparisons in the Rift. Making Use of Cross-Place Events and Histories in Moments of World Historical Change*, in A. Amelina et al. (eds.), *Beyond Methodological Nationalism*, cit., pp. 176-197.

[41] On this matter, see: Daniela L. Caglioti, *Waging War on Civilians: The Expulsion of Aliens in the Franco-Prussian War*, "Past and Present", 221, 2013, pp. 161-95. On earlier examples in a colonial context, see: Sibylle Scheipers, *The Use of Concentration Camps in Colonial Warfare*, "Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History", n. 43-4, 2015, pp. 678-698.

Anderson discusses different temporal scales by focusing on a broader range of practices: each contribution makes context-specific periodisations without seeking an overall historical linearity, conforming only to the requirement to identify connections with other coercive measures often studied separately. In their chapter on penal colonies in Europe, Mary Gibson and Ilaria Poerio trace medium- to long-term trends to the backdrop of the First World War, which they consider the main watershed. A phase of experimentation, characterised by the co-existence of different types of penal colonies, was succeeded by a phase of stabilisation and consolidation of coercive technologies and methods.[42] This macro periodisation does not exclude other parallel temporalities. In fact, in Anderson's overview, the Great War does not seem to have the same prominence: in general, conflicts drive the growing adoption of convict labour for different needs and purposes.[43] The co-existence of forms of punishment is a permanent historical feature, with mobile configurations taking place in various places and times that do not challenge the book's micro-sociological approach.

At the same time, the presence of other internal temporalities is not excluded, for example with regard to the history of internal exile. As for all state organisations that lacked overseas possessions, in Italy too, exile represented one of the most important repressive instruments. Forced residence, as defined by the Pica law of 1863, and police custody, its direct emanation as of 1926, represent a "peculiarity" of the peninsula.[44] Neither of the two measures resemble the wide range of prison practices that were implemented from the end of the eighteenth century and throughout the nineteenth century; they were not, for example, designed to rehabilitate convicts or to obtain cheap labour force for public projects, especially in the case of forced residence experiences on the islands in the centre-south.[45] In his analysis of forms of internment during the Second World War, Capogreco goes a step further, trying to understand the transference between different management models. For him, the islands of confinement are the most direct reference point for the internment camps managed by the Ministry of Internal Affairs; likewise, the prisoner-of-war camps and prison experiences in colonised lands are good examples of what he defined "parallel" internment.[46]

[42] M. Gibson, I. Poerio, *Modern Europe, 1750-1950*, in Clare Anderson (ed.), *A Global History of Convicts and Penal Colonies*, cit., pp. 338-339.

[43] Think, in particular, of the examples of the Russian, British and Spanish empires, mentioned in the introduction and further developed in the relative contributions.

[44] Ivi, p. 352.

[45] M. Gibson, I. Poerio, *Modern Europe, 1750*-1950, in Clare Anderson (ed.), *A Global History of Convicts and Penal Colonies*, cit., pp. 342-343 and 352-355.

[46] C.S. Capogreco, *Mussolini's Camps*, cit., pp. 61-62. One of the most recent and innovative contributions on the Italian case is Daniela Caglioti's study on the First World War, especially her explanation for why the Italian authorities often preferred, for civilians, the flexibility of forced residence to the establishment of concentration camps. D.L. Caglioti, *Enemy Aliens and Colonial Subjects: Confinement and Internment in Italy, 1911-19*, in S. Manz, P. Panayi, M. Stibbe (eds.), *Internment during the First World War*, cit., pp. 131 e 135.

The same can be said for spatial conceptualisation. The examined texts convey a more complex and intrinsically dynamic meaning of the concept of space. Capogreco's analysis of the "stratification of functions that the concentration camps undergo over time" is accompanied by a focus on the circulation of internees throughout the peninsular area.[47] In the long term, a picture emerges of staff and convict mobility between the various internment locations that remain to be fully assessed, especially if we consider these places in terms of one great "concentration camp universe" that Italy gradually improved.[48] In the 1940s, this trend was overlapped — in the troubled times of war — by the unstable and precarious nature of the Italian strategies of internment, both in terms of the location of new camps and the type of convicts to be included.

This mobility is framed in broader trajectories in the contributions edited by Anderson, as the global convict flows affect not only the strategies of domination, but also the radicalisation of the "dominated" as well as the construction of relevant collective imaginaries.[49] Stibbe reinforces this concept by insisting that we must understand internment as a "migration-led process". It thus becomes clear that the global movement of convicts during periods of conflict is part and parcel of a broader acceleration in the movement of goods and people. Stibbe, then, disproves the traditional idea of conflict as a moment in which borders are tightened and mobility slows down.[50]

Conclusion

A number of research trends emerge from my analysis of the three essays under examination here, which involve the historiography of prison experiences, in particular that of civilian internment. First of all, there is strong interconnection between very distant (until recently) strands of historiography. Clearly, the global turn has had a significant impact on this area, albeit not in a homogeneous way. The study of non-European contexts has made it possible not only to relativise the experiences that characterised the Old Continent, but also to see how Europe is connected to the rest of the world. The historiog-

[47] "[T]he more complex set of issues tied to the stratification of functions through time experienced by concentrationary structures." C.S. Capogreco, *Mussolini's Camps*, cit., p. 4.

[48] I am using the concept that David Rousset coined in 1946, for I believe it is necessary to underline that — in addition to the gradual consolidation of prison practices as described by Gibson and Poerio — we must consider an equally important process of consolidation that regards the network of places of relegation, especially in the smaller islands; these places must be understood as a single detention organism, adapted to the political circumstances of the various historical periods. David Rousset, *L'univers concentrationnaire*, Paris, Editions du Pavois, 1946.

[49] A case in point is Christian De Vito's study, *The Spanish Empire, 1500-1898*, in C. Anderson, *A Global History of Convicts and Penal Colonies*, cit., pp. 65-96.

[50] On these reflections see M. Stibbe, *Civilian internment during the First World War*, cit., p. 293.

raphy on forced mobility and migratory processes, in particular, seems to have played a considerable role in restoring the dynamism that seemed to be lacking in the study of internment. The examined publications demonstrate that new research perspectives focusing on the spatial element — rather than weakening the national paradigms — have encouraged a reconfiguration that, for the Italian case, has been a sign of unprecedented similarities both at a diachronic and a synchronic level.

Moreover, my analysis of the indicators used in these essays has allowed me to understand that the different strategies of investigating internment at the spatial-temporal level are not alternative to each other, but complementary. Even in their diversity, they all adopt a micro-sociological approach aimed at avoiding the reification of both categories of analysis and periodisations, through a perspective that is never static.

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