

## ABSTRACTS

### Postcards from the Italian Crisis

**Elena Borelli**

#### **Crisis as Decadence in Paolo Sorrentino's *La Grande Bellezza*.**

In this paper I analyze the movie “La Grande Bellezza” (Paolo Sorrentino, 2013) as a testament to the ongoing crisis in Italian society. Specifically, I argue that the movie portrays the condition of Italy between the end of the twentieth century and the present day as a state of “decadence.” By “decadence,” I refer to a historiographical and critical category that was developed at the end of the nineteenth century in Europe by prominent exponents of the literary criticism of the *fin de siècle* such as Vittorio Pica, Arturo Graf, Benedetto Croce and György Lukács, in order to describe the moral, political and cultural crisis going on at that time. In my contribution I plan to show that such a category is still useful, many years later, to frame Sorrentino's criticism of post-Berlusconi's Italy. The title of the movie itself, with its reference to beauty, a beauty surrounded by decay, suggests this interpretative key: throughout the movie, one can see the contrast between the past splendor of Rome and its current corruption. Indeed, the juxtaposition of beauty and decay, past and present, is one of the major themes of the discourse of decadence. My contribution will focus in particular on one “decadent” theme, which figures prominently in the movie. I will describe the ineptitude of the intellectual class vis-à-vis the political situation in Italy, which is portrayed both in the role of the protagonist, Jep Gambardella, and in the circle of writers and artists surrounding him. Much like in the *fin de siècle*, even today intellectuals are marginalized, unable to change reality or even provide a counter-discourse to the rampant vulgarity of the present day. My paper will also touch upon the theme of regeneration as a return to a pristine reality outside of history and time.

**Paolo Carusi**

#### **La crisi della “prima repubblica” nelle parole della canzone d'autore italiana.**

Alla metà degli anni '80, in Italia cominciavano a manifestarsi i primi sintomi della crisi del sistema dei partiti della “prima repubblica”. La stagione di Tangentopoli era ancora lontana, ma nella mentalità collettiva già cominciava a germogliare il seme dell'antipolitica. Attenti e questo fermento erano gli autori della canzone colta, i cantautori, i quali coglievano lucidamente nei loro testi quegli elementi che sarebbero divenuti di lì a poco determinanti nella crisi irreversibile della “prima repubblica”: lo strapotere dei partiti, il consociativismo, la corruzione, il ruolo sempre più pervasivo dei mezzi di comunicazione di massa. Attraverso i testi di denuncia dei cantautori (Battiato, Bennato, Bertoli, Dalla, De Andrè, De Gregori, Gaber, Guccini, Jannacci, Paoli, Venditti, etc.), l'intervento ripercorre il crepuscolo degli anni '80 e la stagione degli scandali di Tangentopoli, giungendo fino al 1994, anno dell'affermazione di Forza Italia, la nuova formazione di Silvio Berlusconi.

### Of Money and Factories: The Roots of the Economic Crisis

**Stefano Adamo**

#### **The crisis of the Italian textile industry in the literary works of Edoardo Nesi: a mix of nostalgia and self-complacency.**

Italian literature has recently seen a resurgence of economic themes. Among the most prominent voices of this new wave is Edoardo Nesi, a former industrialist of the Prato textile district who earned the 2011 Strega Prize for his autobiographical novel *Storia della mia gente*. Nesi has

since become a regular contributor to the *Corriere della sera*, and with his latest book, *Le nostre vite senza ieri*, he has further emphasized his role as a public intellectual. In Nesi's view, Italy's participation in the global economy has exposed Italian manufacturers to a level of competition that they were not ready to meet. Such disadvantage, Nesi contends, was exacerbated by the adoption of the Euro, which put an end to the former practice of using monetary policy to offset trade deficits. As a result, many firms lost market shares, and the Prato textile district, despite its glorious past, ended up being largely taken over by Chinese businesses. In this paper, I criticize Nesi's account of the present Italian crisis and argue against his sympathetic view of the former political-industrial system. For example, Nesi's wistfulness for the pre-Euro policy of currency depreciation weakens his stance for at least two reasons. First, because it ignores that currency depreciation had significant consequences on inflation, and therefore fails to acknowledge that insofar as it benefited businesses by easing exports, it penalized consumers by lowering their purchasing power. Second, because it conceals the fact that most small and medium Italian businesses lost international competitiveness precisely because they rested too long on advantages obtained through such policies. In sum, Nesi's nostalgic stance on Italy's industrial decline seems mostly an expression of self-complacency. For this reason, and in contrast with the intention that transpires from his books, I argue that Nesi does not positively contribute to the current debates on unemployment, income inequality, or the Italian economic crisis; on the contrary, his views are more likely to contribute to an exacerbation of those debates.

### **Andrea Guiso**

#### **Politica e sistema bancario tra Prima e Seconda Repubblica.**

Il paper intende analizzare le conseguenze politiche e istituzionali della crisi del sistema pubblico dell'economia nell'Italia degli anni '80-2000. Particolare attenzione verrà dedicata al ruolo del sistema bancario nel processo che, attraverso le privatizzazioni, avrebbe contribuito a mettere in crisi, con effetti contraddittori, la tradizionale preminenza del potere politico sul potere economico, nonché il modello stesso di democrazia consociativa consolidatosi, tra gli anni Sessanta e Settanta, intorno alla concezione amministrativa del credito, alla funzione redistributiva della spesa pubblica e a una politica monetaria sensibile alle esigenze del Tesoro. La fine dello "Stato-banchiere", in un paese storicamente "bancocentrico" come l'Italia, e profondamente segnato dal ruolo tutoriale svolto dal pubblico potere nei confronti di un "capitalismo senza capitali", segnerà infatti, all'inizio degli anni '90, l'avvio di una fase di profonde tensioni e disconnessioni tra Stato e mercato, tra economia pubblica e privata, tra potere politico e nuovo sistema finanziario plasmato, sotto la guida direzionale della Banca d'Italia, nel contesto della finanziarizzazione globale dell'economia e del vincolo esterno con l'Europa della moneta unica. Una fase, come si cercherà di argomentare, destinata a concentrare nella nuova finanza una prerogativa di potere e di autonomia decisionale inedita; ma anche a far riemergere una robusta dimensione di continuità con le relazioni Stato-mercato "d'antico regime". Con la conseguenza che ciò che si era riusciti a cacciare dalla finestra (l'ingerenza della politica nelle strategie industriali e nell'assetto operativo delle banche) sarebbe finito per rientrare dalla porta di servizio. In particolare attraverso la disciplina ibrida delle Fondazioni di origine bancaria e una disorganica e fallace regolamentazione giuridica della governance e delle funzioni di vigilanza. La disintermediazione politica del sistema di credito avviata negli anni '80 si sarebbe così mostrata non soltanto incapace di eliminare il patologico intreccio tra politica, finanza e interessi industriali, bensì suscettibile di trasformare quel sistema in un campo di scontro permanente tra i vecchi e nuovi irrequieti centri di potere sorti dalla frantumazione del sistema politico della Prima Repubblica.

## **The Crisis of the Italian Political System (1)**

**Michelangelo Vercesi**

### **Twenty Years On: Failures and Successes of Party Institutionalisation.**

The breakdown of the former party system in the early 1990s and the birth of the so-called Second Republic went with a dramatic change of the party organisational forms. Whilst during the First Republic the Italian political parties mainly matched with the classic bureaucratic mass party model, the Second Republic has been characterised by several personalistic parties, i.e., by parties internally poorly structured and strongly dependent on their leader, who has usually been also the founding-father. It is safe to say that a widespread presence of these parties can raise concerns about the possibilities that a given political system has to reach a certain stabilisation and to reproduce itself. Indeed, low degrees of party internal institutionalisation might restrain the possibilities a party has to go through the process of leadership renewal and acquire a value on its own as representative organisation. This, in turn, could lead to the instability of the party system. This paper focuses on the topic by taking three of the parties which have characterised several moments of the Italian political life in the last twenty years (Forza Italia-Pdl-Forza Italia; Northern League; Italy of Values) as case studies. It seeks to show how (and explain why), moving from (under many respects) similar organisational traits, they have reached different outcomes in terms of organisational (i.e., leadership) change, subsequently to scandals addressed to their leaders. Overall, the analysis proves that the Italian political history of the last twenty years has gone – at the level of single parties – hand in hand, on the one hand, with a series of attempts for party institutionalisation and, on the other, with (quite successful) resistances to the process.

**Massimo Piermattei**

### **The “EU factor” in the Italian crisis of 1994.**

The state of the art on the Italian crisis of the first ‘90s and the (still few) studies carried out on this topic usually use to search the roots of that crisis mainly just within the framework of the Italian social, political and institutional systems, without considering the “EU factor”. However, such events like the starting of the Single Market and the main points of Maastricht treaty – namely, EMU - clearly played a role in spreading the crisis and challenging Italy as a whole. Thence, this proposal aims to show, from an historical perspective, the impact of European integration in 1994 and how the issues related to the EU influenced the building of a new party system, from five points of view: the end of the rhetoric approach to the European integration (through the electoral campaign for the EP and the shock produced by the Schauble-Lamers’ paper); the end of the unanimous support for the integration process and the birth of a cleavage on the EU issues between the two main coalition which contended the government in 1994 (it will also be very interesting to show the divergences inside those coalitions); the impact of the general election in the relationships with EU partners (especially concerning the presence of post-fascist members in the first Berlusconi’s Government – e.g. the resolution of EP in May – and the appointment of Antonio Martino as Minister of Foreign Affairs); the role of Scalfaro who tried, in the difficult phases of winter 1994-1995, to lead the country out of the crisis and preparing Italy to deal with the challenge of Maastricht; the attempt of the Northern League to merge the domestic institutional reform with the European challenge.

**Bruno Anili**

### **In Monti We Trust(ed).The (Undemocratic?) Appeal of Technocratic Neoliberalism in Italy.**

As the global economic and financial crisis that started in 2008 entered its most acute stage in Europe in the summer of 2011, the response at both the levels of the member states and of the institutions of the European Union (EU) revived and intensified worries that had long been

voiced by a variety of critics of the project of European integration. Different diagnoses of the problem of the “democratic deficit” of the EU converge in lamenting the limited accountability of EU decision-making institutions to the democratically elected assemblies of the member states; in Eriksen and Fossum’s analysis (2002), this amounted to “deficiencies in representation, representativeness, accountability and support.” Though Moravcsik (2002) sedated such anxieties by pointing out that the EU was held to standards of “an ancient, Westminster-style, or frankly utopian form of deliberative democracy,” the developments of the last few years alert us to the eventuality that democracy might not only be deficient in its intergovernmental projections, but that its quality might also be deteriorating in the traditional governmental arena. In this paper I examine in particular the Italian case. Much more forcefully than the Spanish transition after the November 2011 elections, and perhaps even more acutely than the unfolding of the Greek crisis, the formation of a “technical” cabinet in lieu of a political one in Italy signals a paradigmatic shift in the model and practices of political representation. Replacing a center-right government (albeit a sui generis one like Silvio Berlusconi’s, to be sure) with one that was both apolitical (in that the Prime Minister Mario Monti and his fellow cabinet members were not formally affiliated to any party) and superpolitical (in that an overwhelming majority of representatives in Parliament supported it) sanctioned the replacement of politics with a science of the administration in which the people’s role is more to validate decisions made on their behalf than to orient the decision-making process. In assessing the precarious relation to democracy of this form of technocratic neoliberalism, I draw on Hannah Arendt’s indictment of the appearance of necessity in the public realm in modernity, with the disappearance of action in geometric correspondence to this movement. This sort of Platonic rule by “economist kings,” though, might not stand out as an aberration of the principle of representative politics, but rather as its ultimate culmination. If so, then, contesting the axiom of the inevitability of the neoliberal austerity measures might be even more important than questioning their feasibility or even desirability. In analyzing the mechanisms for the production of consensus on the market as “a site of truth,” I consider Foucault’s analysis of neoliberalism and governmentality. In the European variant of neoliberalism, typified by the Italian case under the tenure of Monti, the liberal principle of limited government, while proclaiming the retreat of an overly intrusive state, at the same time produces a number of new governmental practices. I conclude by briefly reflecting on the emergence of the charismatic leadership of Matteo Renzi, and ponder as to whether it restores more familiar forms of democratic governance, or rather indicates the popular acceptance of a more palatable technocratic paradigm.

## **Narratives and Counternarratives in the Second Republic**

**Giulia Bassi**

### **Introiezione e ri-proiezione del paradigma della crisi. Alcune considerazioni sulla storiografia sul partito comunista italiano.**

Gli anni novanta sono stati visti e interpretati da più parti, tanto in ambito accademico quanto nel dibattito pubblico, come un periodo caratterizzato monoliticamente per una profonda crisi estesa a più livelli (politico, morale, culturale, sociale). La fine del sistema dei partiti così come si era presentato fino a quel momento, le indagini giudiziarie del pool di Mani pulite, il definitivo esaurirsi della stagione delle grandi proteste, il primo governo Berlusconi e l’avvento del ‘berlusconismo’, sono tutti plessi logico-narrativi che sono il prodotto e hanno ad un tempo concorso al prodursi di una grande metanarrazione sul definitivo tramonto dell’‘era degli eroi’, della scomparsa dei grandi valori, del fallimento degli ideali e della speranza di un rinnovamento sociale e politico del paese. Una lettura, questa, tanto forte, tanto incisiva da poter essere considerata vero e proprio monopolio narrativo complessivo della gran parte della cultura pubblica e politica della sinistra di quegli anni. Un esempio di questa dinamica narrativa è

costituito dalle modalità con cui molti studi dell'Italia contemporanea, durante e da gli anni novanta, hanno risposto a funzionalità legate al campo culturale e politico della loro gestazione scientifica. A partire dalle mie ricerche sul partito comunista italiano e attraverso una lettura delle grandi opere di sintesi sul PCI tra i primi novanta e oggi, mi propongo di sviluppare una riflessione su come alcuni autori abbiano introiettato, più o meno consapevolmente, il paradigma della crisi, riproiettandolo poi, più o meno consapevolmente, nello studio e nella lettura del proprio oggetto d'indagine: attraverso velate o manifeste dichiarazioni su come il partito avrebbe o non avrebbe dovuto agire, precisi tagli cronologici, la storicizzazione di specifiche issues, l'utilizzo di valori politici in chiave storiografica, il focus su determinate tematiche e così via.

### **Michelangelo Di Giacomo e Novella di Nunzio**

#### **After 30 years: the last PCI between action and narration.**

The paper analyzes the last five years of PCI (1984-1989) and the following twenty years of narrations about the history of PCI. It is divided in two parts. In the first one the aim is to describe the crisis of self-representation and of the role of PCI managed by the secretary of the party. The second part is an enquiry into the narrative recreations of PCI, offered by the Italian intellectual environment after the end of the party. The debate about the identity of PCI will be reconstructed through the following sources: memoirs, «L'Unità», «Rinascita», memoranda of "Comitato Centrale", in order to underline how monothematic social movements and the European Social Democracy had been influent for the self-cognition of the party. The narrative production about PCI published of the last twenty years will be read pursuing two guide-lines and two fundamental objectives: examining who are today the Italian left-wing intellectuals and how do they interpret and account the parable of PCI; studying the transformation of PCI into an epic subject and the implication of this narrative operation. Thus, the final intent is to describe how, after the crisis of the self-representation made by the Italian communists, this kind of internal narration has been substituted by an external narration about communism.

### **Fabrizio Cotichia**

#### **An alternative view: Counter-narratives, Italian public opinion and military operations abroad.**

Recent studies have persuasively illustrated how the strategic narratives crafted by policy-makers shape public attitudes regarding military operations. Strategic narratives are conceived as crucial tools in order to convince the public in case of international conflicts. Consistent and compelling narratives enhance the perceived legitimacy of military operations. However, exogenous elements such as the presence of alternative counter-narratives, play a considerable role in hindering a wider acceptance of the message.

The goal of the paper is to investigate the effectiveness of counter-narratives developed by political parties, pacifist groups and associations in order to contrast the "plot" designed by Italian governments to gain the support of public opinion towards post 2001 military operations abroad. Why have some counter-narratives been more effective than others? Drawing on discourse analysis and interviews, the paper aims to answer this question, examining how and to what extent the counter-narratives have successfully contested the official strategic narratives.

### **The Crisis of the Italian Left**

#### **Lilia Giugni**

##### **The Italian left: an ideational crisis?**

The extant literature on the European left has largely neglected the role played by the ideational factor in boosting parties' transformations and particularly in determining their ongoing crisis.

Whenever ideas have been incorporated in the existing theories, they appeared as merely epiphenomenal with respect to external constraints or actors' material interests (Przeworski and Sprague 1986; Panebianco 1988; Kitschelt 1994). Building on those works that -within the historical and discursive institutionalism approaches- invite to 'take ideas seriously' (Hall 1993; Hay 2001; Schmidt 2008), this paper will show how ideas can shape agency and dynamically intervene in the causal process of party change. Hence, it will suggest that ideas (and/or their lack or incoherence) are crucial in making sense of the current difficulties of left-wing political parties. The vicissitudes of the PCI-PDS-DS-PD between the early 1990s and the early 2010s will be thus examined in the light of these considerations. Firstly, it will be investigated how the internal patterns of cultural production, the relationship between party elites and intellectuals and the exchanges with other actors within and outside the Italian political system affected the renewal of the Italian left. Secondly, it will be argued that scrutinizing these factors help to explain why the Italian former communists brilliantly achieved the *pars destruens* of their transition process, but failed in accomplishing and institutionalizing a much needed *pars construens*. In so doing, this analysis will bring together history and political science perspectives and will provide thought-provoking insight into nowadays' Italian political, institutional and cultural scenario.

### **Nicola degli Esposti**

#### **A Normal Country: Italian Post-Communists and the Challenge of Government.**

When the collapse of the Italian political system occurred in 1992, the main opposition party appeared ready to seize the opportunity offered by the new scenario. Since the mid-1980s, the Italian Communist Party (PCI) had undertaken a deep process of transformation, which was quickened under the chairmanship of Achille Occhetto (1988-1994). In 1991 the PCI changed its name in Democratic Party of the Left (PDS) and joined the international organizations of democratic socialism. The first opportunity for taking the power was offered in 1994, when the main ruling parties had been extremely weakened by a wave of arrests (Tangentopoli). However, the left-wing coalition assembled by Occhetto was severely beaten by the outsider Silvio Berlusconi, who managed to put together the far-right and most of the dissolved former ruling coalition. This harsh defeat drove the PDS to question both its stance and the transformation of the previous years. Under the leadership of Massimo D'Alema, the PDS abandoned some of the ideas adopted recently and resumed some concepts more consistent with its own tradition. D'Alema's view rejected the idea of discontinuity between the First and the Second Republic and reintroduced the old notion of an 'Italian exceptionalism'. This notion had two main consequences in this context. On the one hand the PDS addressed progressive Catholics in order to build a wider alliance (l'Ulivo) led by a Catholic candidate (Romano Prodi). On the other hand, D'Alema thought that Italy was not ready for a modern two-party system due to the irresponsibility of Berlusconi's coalition. The main task of the Italian left was therefore to build a complete democracy by making the Italian right responsible for the country (involvement in constitutional reforms. This new stance, summarized by D'Alema in the slogan "A normal country" (1995), constituted the core of the ideology which led the left through the 1990s and, though with some changes, towards the establishment of the Democratic Party in 2007.

### **Emanuel Rota**

#### **Between Berlusconi and Europe: the Crisis of the Italian Left at the end of the Cold War.**

Since the 1970s, the Italian Communist party was looking for an international collocation that would legitimize its participation in the Italian government. Since the events in Czechoslovakia in 1968 and those in Chile in 1973, the Italian Communists were aware of the impossibility to become the ruling party in Italy within the Yalta framework. Slowly but firmly, the right wing

of the PCI, led by Giorgio Amendola and by Giorgio Napolitano, cultivated a “European” strategy, where the European process of unification could increase the space of autonomy of the European countries from the Americans and Russians and legitimize the PCI’s participation in the government of Italy in this new European framework. The strategy could successfully open the doors for a dialogue between the Italian Communists and the European Socialists in Europe and between Italian Communists and pro-European Catholics in Italy. Thanks to this long term strategy, and to the continuity provided by leaders like Napolitano, the heirs of the PCI had a valid political perspective that they were able to maintain after the fall of the Soviet Union. The appearance of Berlusconi at the center of the Italian political system contributed to the reinforcement of the European vocation of the ex-PCI. Berlusconi lacked support in Northern Europe, and presented himself as the embodiment of the logic of the blocs that had marginalized the Italian communists. In the face of Berlusconi’s past (Loggia P2) and of his appropriation of the central points of radical anticommunism in Italy (penetration of Communists in the State machine despite their electoral exclusion), the Italian Left was encouraged to use the process of European unification against Berlusconi. The inability of the EU to develop a European model of welfare and the EU chronic deficit of democratic participations, however, contributed to delegitimize the Italian Left while paradoxically providing its major source of legitimation. When the dismantlement of the Welfare State and the politics of austerity became associated with the European Union, the Italian Left could not abandon the EU without giving the final legitimation to Berlusconi and its allies, even when it meant to abandon the traditional economic policies of the Left. Only the end of Berlusconi’s centrality in the last few years has allowed the realignment of the Italian left in a more critical position toward Europe. My paper reconstructs the major historical events of the Europeanist creed of the Italian Left and its implications for the relations between the Left and Berlusconi in the twenty years of his hegemony in the Italian political system.

## **Leadership Between Old and New Models**

### **Massimo Cerulo**

#### **Uomini capaci di vibrare. La politica emozionale di Berlusconi, Renzi e Grillo: tra costruzione della leadership e forme di antipolitica.**

Negli ultimi vent’anni si è diffusa, in Italia, quella che definirei una politica emozionale, in cui diversi rappresentanti istituzionali hanno “giocato” con le emozioni e sulle emozioni degli elettori, utilizzandole spesso come strumenti di comunicazione e di persuasione nei confronti dei cittadini: come una specie di linguaggio seduttivo. Vorrei concentrare la mia analisi proprio sull’agire sociale messo in atto dagli attori politici, ossia da quei politici di professione italiani che si trovano costretti a fare i conti con la gestione e la manifestazione pubblica delle loro emozioni (o di quelle che vogliono fare apparire come tali) e quindi con la dimensione simbolica connessa all’utilizzo di queste ultime nelle pratiche di vita quotidiana. La mia tesi è che i politici di professione italiani tendano a utilizzare strategicamente le emozioni nelle loro performance pubbliche con l’obiettivo di acquisire consenso o mantenere quello già ottenuto. Essi mettono in atto quelle che definirei “tattiche emozionali di micropolitica” e quindi un progetto razionale che prevede quali emozioni veicolare durante una determinata situazione sociale e nei confronti di specifici soggetti con i quali si interagisce. Obiettivo del presente intervento è di analizzare, comparativamente, la politica emozionale messa in atto, rispettivamente, da Berlusconi, Renzi e Grillo. Attraverso un’analisi sociologica dei comportamenti pubblici manifestati dai soggetti, l’attenzione sarà focalizzata sia sulle forme di leadership emerse dall’utilizzo di tali “tattiche emozionali” sia sulle derive di antipolitica emerse nelle ultime campagne elettorali.

### **Paolo Campolongo**

#### **“I Would Prefer Not To:” Beppe Grillo’s M5S against the Establishment.**

According to Hardt and Negri (2000), the formula of absolute refusal that defines Melville's character, Bartleby the Scrivener, as an archetypal figure of opposition, places him in the condition of "continuously tread[ing] on the verge of suicide," while, in political terms, survival would imply going "beyond the simple refusal [...] to construct a new mode of life and above all a new community." In this paper, I propose to read the political experience of Beppe Grillo's Movimento 5 Stelle (M5S) precisely as torn between constituting itself as a political player, albeit one cemented in its opposition to the status quo, and refusing to negotiate with the political establishment altogether. This stance would seem to foster the idea that there is a radical difference between the tenets of Grillo's group and the functioning of traditional parties. While recognizing the innovative features of some of its proposals and its *modus operandi*, this paper explores an odd continuity of tactics between M5S's and Berlusconi's electoral and self-marketing strategies. I will argue that, in using a rhetoric of conflict to distinguish the internal 'purity' of their factions from a contaminated external environment, Grillo and Berlusconi have both pursued a similar objective: that of presenting themselves as representatives of a "clean" civil society opposed to a corrupt constituted power. Italy's recent history has shown that this rhetoric of purity and this politics of refusal may degenerate into an interpretation of power that desecrates the institutional life of the country, while promoting unmediated forms of popular participation in the economy of government. A form of populism of which both Berlusconi and Grillo are examples, insofar as they impersonate a political model that has been quite reductively defined as "anti-politics."

**Catherine O' Rawe**

**Il corpo del capo: Berlusconi, Crisis, Masculinity.**

Much of the discussion of the Italian 'crisis' of the Berlusconi period has focused on the supposed cultural degradation effected by the mass media in Italy, and this cultural degradation has also been strongly discursively tied to the terms of a perceived gender crisis; this crisis relates both to the representation of women (cf in particular the debates around Zanardo's *Il corpo delle donne* (2010) and the *Se Non Ora Quando* protests in 2011), but also to the crisis of masculinity that Berlusconi is thought to embody (cf Belpoliti, *Il corpo del capo* (2010) and Chiurco (ed.), *Filosofia di Berlusconi: l'essere e il nulla nell'Italia del Cavaliere* (2011)).

This paper will interrogate the terms of this gender crisis: firstly, it will examine the discourse around Berlusconi and crisis masculinity, paying particular attention to Bernini's view of *berlusconismo* as a 'catastrofe della virilità' (2011), as well as to Bellasai's statement that Berlusconi represents *l'autobiografia sessuale della nazione maschile*, and will note how Berlusconi is generally read as feminized (and thus as a degraded version of masculinity). Then it will examine the terms in which critiques of mass culture in the Berlusconi period (see in particular Panarari, *L'egemonia sottoculturale* (2010) and Mastrantonio and Bonami's *Irrazionale popolare* (2008)) are themselves deeply and often problematically gendered. Finally, it will extrapolate from this to analyse how in two acclaimed recent films, *La grande bellezza* (Sorrentino, 2013) and *Viva la libertà* (Andò, 2013), these threads come together, and how criticism of a 'feminized' (Berlusconian) mass culture is strongly linked to nostalgia for prior and more authentic forms of masculinity.

**Electoral Defeats in National and Local Context**

**Paolo Chiochetti**

**The Radical Left in the Italian Crisis.**

The crisis and transformation of the Italian Communist Party (PCI) in 1989-1991 (Ignazi, 1992; Liguori, 2009) has been one of the main components of the transition between "first" and "second" republic (Grilli di Cortona, 2007). While the majority of the party enthusiastically

embraced the key trends of the period – bipolarism, Europeanisation, state retrenchment, neoliberalism, decentralisation –, seeing in them a unique opportunity to end the *conventio ad excludendum* against the communists and to become a natural party of government, a minority pursued the opposite course. Despite a promising start, however, the “new” Italian radical left has failed to put up an effective resistance against these developments and, ultimately, has succumbed to their pressure. Firstly, the Communist Refoundation Party (PRC) has been torn asunder by the question of its role within the bipolar political competition, fragmenting into a myriad of competing organisations. Secondly, the electoral and societal influence of these fragments has collapsed after 2007, calling into question their very survival as viable actors of the national political life. Thirdly, most of them have followed a path of progressive ideological and political de-radicalisation, ending up abandoning several of their funding principles. The present paper will chart the trajectory of the Italian radical left between 1991 and 2014, assessing the relative weight of subjective mistakes and environmental constraints in its ultimate failure. A comparative approach will show that the latter predominate and largely account for its anomalous position vis-à-vis its Western European counterparts.

### **Enrico Mannari**

#### **Il caso Livorno: la “subcultura rosa” tra declino e trasformazione.**

Quel che era nell'aria, ma non del tutto prevedibile, è accaduto. La sconfitta del Pd in una città simbolo come Livorno e la vittoria di un partito-non partito come il M5s. Il mix di ribellismo e razionalità si è espresso in maniera dirompente. Anche con il non voto: se è vero che in generale è un indice attuale delle difficoltà della democrazia rappresentativa, per Livorno si ha la netta sensazione che sia stato un ulteriore segnale di ribellione verso quello che è stato considerato l'immobilismo; le vere e proprie deficienze progettuali delle ultime amministrazioni.

D'altronde i segnali erano ben chiari nelle elezioni politiche del maggio 2013: ha colpito l'immaginario collettivo, il giovane che nel bel servizio "Tramonto rosso" di Piazza Pulita, dopo aver dichiarato di aver votato M5s, canta bandiera rossa. Si trattava di un gesto ironico o diceva qualcosa di più e di diverso? D'altronde occorre registrare un risultato non scontato nelle sue dimensioni, in particolare per quanto riguarda la novità assoluta di Buongiorno Livorno, una lista civica caratterizzata da un humus di sinistra assai composito.

E' fuori luogo pensare che il ribellismo che si è manifestato in tante congiunture della storia di Livorno, questa volta si sia manifestato contro gli eredi storici del vecchio Pci? Quel partito che aveva svolto una funzione identitaria, ideologica, educativa, persino di intrattenimento, perché il tempo che veniva passato nella sezione era tempo di crescita, di formazione.

Quel modo di concepire il partito non c'è più da tempo, perché in primo luogo è cambiato il mondo. Il nuovo partito, il Pd, doveva e dovrebbe essere il risultato di culture politiche diverse da tradursi in idee e progetti, accompagnati da nuove forme di partecipazione, non certo la retorica della democrazia diretta.

A Livorno, il Pd è apparso invischiato nella pulsione conservatrice a mantenere le cose come stanno, dove ha prevalso la fedeltà e l'autoreferenzialità, comunque si configurasse, rispetto alle idee innovative necessarie per una città in crisi d'identità e forse non solo dal punto di vista economico e sociale. Come ed in che modo in una città dai forti caratteri originali, identificata nell'immaginario collettivo come città ribelle, caratterizzata nel lungo periodo da una peculiare “subcultura rossa”, si è giunti a quello che potrebbe apparire un anomalo scenario politico dirompente?

### **Jacopo Perazzoli**

#### **Where it began, it starts to end: The Way-Out from «Berlusconism» through the 2011 Milan Local Elections.**

I intend show how the end of the so-called «Berlusconism» began in Milan, the city where it was born at the beginning of the Nineties. Here, the parties created by Berlusconi (Forza Italia

and Popolo della Libertà) and his allies (Lega Nord first of all) had their electoral basis and the city was always considered «unassailable» by the political opponents. In May, a few months before being replaced by Mario Monti as Prime Minister, the end of twenty years of Berlusconi-era was announced, in my opinion, by the victory of Giuliano Pisapia, the mayor candidate of the centre-left, against Letizia Moratti, the mayor of centre-right, the coalition that was at head of the city since 1993. In addition these aspects, I will focus on the electoral techniques that permitted the victory of centre-left, because it has coincided with the end of Berlusconi-era in Italy.

## **Picturing and Depicting the Crisis**

### **Kate Willman**

#### **De Cataldo's *Nelle mani giuste* and the New Italian Epic's Approach to the Italian Crisis.**

De Cataldo's *Nelle mani giuste* was one of the first works of literature to directly portray Italy's crisis of the early nineties. The events of this 2007 novel take place between autumn 1992 and December 1993, not coincidentally the starting point of the literary phenomenon known as the New Italian Epic, set out in Wu Ming 1's 'memorandum' of 2008. Like other texts associated with the phenomenon, *Nelle mani giuste* is characterised by stylistic experimentation and a renewed sense of political and ethical commitment in literature. It portrays the aftermath of the death of a shadowy character known as 'il Vecchio', the secret puppet master controlling the Italian state until the early nineties, and charts the rise of Berlusconi in order to trace back how we arrived at the current situation. Like other recent writers, De Cataldo sees the period following the end of the Cold War as a watershed, the end of an era that in the novel leaves his orphaned protagonists to negotiate a difficult legacy. *Nelle mani giuste* is one of several New Italian Epic texts that feature the death of a father figure, a recurring theme which Wu Ming 1 associated with issues of inheritance, generational conflict and responsibility that were brought up by the collapse of the First Republic. It provides a prime example of the New Italian Epic's drive to interrogate the failings of the past and present through fiction. In doing so, these writers wish to help this generation become the parents, as Wu Ming 1 memorably framed it, or, in other words, take responsibility for the new Italy the crisis ushered in.

### **Francesco Chianese**

#### **Scrittori senza padre, scrittori senza patria: l'evoluzione del commitment intellettuale dal Pasolini corsaro al Resistere non serve a niente di Walter Siti.**

Procedendo di vent'anni in vent'anni, sembra che la "crisi italiana" continui a essere l'argomento centrale nelle discussioni di intellettuali e opinionisti, un punto irrisolvibile dell'impatto sociopolitico nonché culturale dell'Italia. Oggi, 2014; vent'anni fa, 1994, primo governo Berlusconi; vent'anni prima ancora, 1974, nel pieno degli "anni di piombo" che Belpoliti ha definito appunto "la storia di una lunga crisi", quando dalle pagine del Corriere della sera ancora rimbombavano gli Scritti Corsari di Pier Paolo Pasolini. Cambia il ruolo dell'intellettuale – dalla militanza, all'impegno postmoderno (Burns, Ceserani, Antonello e Mussgnug), alla "fine del postmoderno" (Luperini) e al richiamo alla responsabilità dei Wu Ming, di Roberto Saviano, e di quegli scrittori che avevano "venticinque-trentanni" all'inizio degli "anni zero" e sembravano voler riprodurre "quel principio di contraddizione che il postmoderno aveva decretato morto e seppellito" (Luperini). Ciò che non sembra essere cambiato è invece il riferimento al nome di Pasolini: la generazione dei figli pare non essere riuscita ad emanciparsi da questa ingombrante figura intellettuale. Nell'epoca del "tramonto del padre" descritta da Massimo Recalcati, gli scrittori continuano a cercare un padre ideale in colui che ha restituito allo scrittore quella funzione che era già stata smarrita nel passaggio dal dopoguerra al miracolo economico. Tra Pasolini e gli scrittori del New Italian Epic c'è una forte

continuità che si costruisce intorno a due elementi, quello del padre e quello della patria (“fatherland”, in inglese), e allo smarrimento di questi due punti di riferimento sono ricondotti i disagi della società italiana. Che posizione hanno in questo sistema, invece, altri scrittori come Walter Siti, che è stato curatore dell’opera omnia di Pasolini, e che ha intitolato il suo ultimo romanzo *Resistere non serve a niente*, richiamandosi in apparenza a tutt’altro che all’impegno? In questa sede si descrive come Pasolini in alcuni *Scritti corsari*, Wu Ming 1 nel manifesto *Noi dobbiamo essere i genitori* e Siti nel suo ultimo romanzo hanno tradotto la necessità di riscoprire l’impegno intellettuale come un nuovo senso di responsabilità che non può prescindere da una riscoperta e ridefinizione della paternità.

### **Alessandro Valenzisi**

#### **Black Crows, Intellectuals and Dandies: the Italian Crisis through the Lens of Cinema.**

After the enthusiasm of building/re-building a country in the aftermath of WWII, and after the short euphoria of the economic boom in the 50s, Italy has always been a country in a perennial state of social, economic and political crisis. Italian intellectuals and artists have always responded promptly to such crisis, leading the debate around them, and highlighting those that were, in their opinion, the important issues at hand.

In particular, Italian film directors have often found their inspiration in moments of crisis, producing dozens of films that either represented, analysed, or absorbed the crisis into their narrative structure. Such a production was particularly abundant in the 60s, to the extent that Lino Micciché even fashioned the definition of “film della crisi” for a group of films of that period. Starting from Micciché’s observations, this paper gives an overview of how the intellectual, political or creative crisis has been addressed in a series of films by leading Italian directors from the 60s to the present. Focussing in particular on *Uccellacci e uccellini* (P.P. Pasolini, 1966), *La salita* (M. Martone, 1997) and *La grande Bellezza* (P. Sorrentino, 2014), I will trace a few recurring themes that have been re-elaborated through the decades, or adapted to the new social and economic situations.

### **Italian Curses: Corruption and the Mafia**

#### **Felia Allum – Alessandro Coletti.**

##### **Italy, politics and mafia twenty years after *tangentopoli*...**

The Italian crisis (1992-94) was not only the crisis of a political class but also a crisis of legitimacy of its different partners, associates and sponsors. This crisis highlighted the extensive corruption, which existed in the North of Italy, between the political elite and the business class and parallel to this, there was the slow uncovering of the widespread links that existed between political parties and Mafias in the South of Italy. *Cosa Nostra*, in particular, reacted violently at losing its political interlocutors by engaging in a terrorist strategy that struck at the heart of the Italian State and Society, murdering judges Falcone and Borsellino. This paper asks the question: has the relationship between politics and the mafias change since 1994? Have mafias changed? Have their relationships with national government, local government and political parties changed? Did they disappear, adapt their strategies or evolve? Using a structure/agency approach and in particular, Jamieson’s (2000) notion of ‘a seasaw’ movement, it seeks to discuss the relationship between Italian politics and mafias since 1994.

#### **Giuseppe Serrantino**

##### **Mapping the ‘Italian Crisis’ 1992-94: Corruption and Political system in Catania. Crisis, Resistance and Restoration.**

The ‘Italian crisis’ of the early 1990s was the outcome of long-standing factors and new events burst into the scene, woven together. Thus, the economic downturn in conjunction with the passing of the 1992 Maastricht Treaty accelerated the collapse, started in the 1980s, of the old

party-system. From the weakening of the latest, the judiciary took the liberty to uncover alarming levels of corruption involving the political and the entrepreneur sectors, in this, stimulating changing into the electorate towards new political appeals. Cosa Nostra, having had its impunity seriously threatened and his political patrons left with small power, inaugurated a terrorist campaign against state representatives, forcing the state to react. Despite the conventional assumption sees these events as a breaking point, it is essential to evaluate if the crisis involved equally all the sectors implicated into it and in which of those the reaction to the crisis was towards change or rather continuity. Moreover, it has not been attempt to locate the crisis within a specific geo-political context in order to gain where the crisis has expedited changings and in which part of the country it has been resisted. The novelty of the present research lies not just in focusing on a specific sector, corruption and political system, but also on a specific context, the city of Catania, in Sicily. Much less known than Palermo by the existing literature, the city has emerged as an example of persistence in terms of political corruption and collusion, despite changing in the party system. Through an analysis of juridical data and in-depth interviews with experts in the juridical and political sphere, initial findings have shown how in Catania entrepreneurship colluded with the Mafia under the supervision of political patron took innovative shapes since the 1960s and that, despite suffering the impact of the crisis, it has resisted along the Second Republic.

### **Anti-Politics in Historical Perspective.**

**George Newth**

#### **The rise of anti-politics and the evolution of regionalism in Piedmont and Padania: La Permanente, Il MARP and The Lega Nord.**

The collapse of the first Berlusconi-led government, barely 7 months after coming to power, was due largely to the presence within the governing coalition, the Polo della Libertà of the Lega Nord, an anti-political movement prepared to act as “opposition within government”. The Lega has until now been largely seen as a modern phenomenon, part of a wider regionalist fault-line which has emerged over the past three decades in European politics reflected by autonomist and regionalist parties in direct conflict with a Europe of the “Nation-States”. However, the regionalist fervour, anti-politics and anti-immigration espoused by the Lega actually have much deeper roots in the history of Italy and Europe. In 1994, Umberto Bossi in an interview with *La Stampa* claimed that the ‘Father of the Lega Nord’ was an autonomist movement from Piedmont formed during the 1950s called Movimento per l’Autonomia Regionale Piemontese (MARP). He was not wrong; many of the issues which would later be at the centre of Lega Nord discourse were raised by MARP. This paper will explore the key historical role of MARP and the region of Piedmont in laying the foundations for the political discourse of the Lega Nord and inventing an imagined community of ‘Padania’ in the 1960s and 1970. The paper treats the party not simply as a break with the past but rather as a product of it, thus allowing us to better understand the phenomenon of the Lega by taking on board both historical and contemporary factors when considering both the origins of the party and of the divisive regionalism it espouses, which has been a continuous component in the Italian crisis.

**Daniele R. Piccio**

#### **Are political parties all the same?**

#### **An analysis of the political finance law proposals (1948-2014).**

Political finance legislation in Italy is widely acknowledged for its shortcomings: it has not solved the fundamental problem of political corruption, which was the ultimate justification for its introduction; it determined a high dependence of political parties from state resources; and finally, as also underlined by international organizations, it characterizes for the presence of loopholes, especially in relation to the external control over the parties’ financial management.

Since the first law introducing state funding to political parties in 1974 until the adoption of the most recent reform in 2014, the Italian regulation of political finance has experienced frequent and at times revolutionary changes. All in all, the way in which political finance legislation has developed in Italy seems to sustain the ‘self-serve’ logic discussed by Katz and Mair in their influential 1995 article. In their perspective, political finance regulation is used primarily as a means by which established political parties grant themselves financial resources for maintaining their organizational survivor while drawing away from society. Arguably, ‘self-serve’ drives would also explain the existing loopholes in political finance laws. Yet, the adoption of legislation is just the end side of the legislative process, and the ‘self-serve’ logic may not apply to all political parties. Focusing on law proposals allows taking a closer look at the parliamentary activity and observing the individual parties’ stances. Based on the digitalized proceeding of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate of the Republic from 1948 to 2014 this paper examines the law proposals presented by Italian parties on political finance regulation. Two are the main empirical questions this paper will address: First, do we find differences across the different political parties? Do we find evidence of political parties which solicited the introduction of a more carefully drafted legislation, proposing to establish mechanisms for greater control and regulation of the parties’ financial management? Second, do we find differences over time, in particular after the corruption scandals, the collapse of the so-called ‘First Republic’ and the turnover of political representatives in the early 1990s?

## **The Crisis of the Political System (2)**

**Martin J. Bull**

### **The Crisis of Italian Institutions: Twenty Years On**

The crisis of Italian institutions has constituted one of the most fundamental aspects of the Italian crisis of the past twenty years. This is primarily because the Italian institutional framework has been – and is still – regarded as inadequate to the needs of Italian democracy and in need of reform to provide stability and improved democratic performance. Yet, the efforts to achieve root and branch institutional reform have, for the most part, come to nothing over the past two decades, although this has not dulled the aspirations to achieve them, as evidenced in the most recent attempt to achieve reform under Matteo Renzi. Institutional reform has consequently become an entrenched part of the Italian political debate and a symbol of long-term failure and Italy’s crisis. Paradoxically, however, the attempt to achieve institutional reform and the debate it has generated has taken place in a context of considerable (some would say dramatic) change precisely in the way that institutions and the broader political system function. Ironically, this may be one of the main reasons for Italy’s failure to achieve reform since the early 1990s, since it has been difficult for political forces to predict with any certainty the likely impact of reforms in a situation of institutional flux, and therefore to agree on the best way forward. This paper will provide an analysis of the twenty year crisis in institutions and the broader functioning of the political system, analyzing how and why the reform efforts have failed as well as the effects of this failure and the implications and opportunities of achieving reform today.

**Mark Donovan**

### **The Second Republic: a new party system, now itself in crisis**

Whilst constitutionally incorrect, the term Second Republic is in wide use and not without merit. If anything, it arguably referred to the implosive shift from the ‘polarised pluralism’ of the First Republic to the ‘moderate pluralism’ of the Second. In fact, the nature of the party system this past 20 years has been contested. Only one of the three defining characteristics of moderate pluralism was clearly met: “a bipolar coalitional configuration” (Sartori, 1976: 179). Thus ideological polarisation has been argued to be too high, and centrifugation too persistent and

significant a feature of political competition. Polarisation, however, was substantially contained within two alliances (Cerrutto & Raniolo, 2013). Consequently, polarisation as a structural condition in which centrist government parties face “bilateral” opposition was never reasserted. Centripetalism dominated. The paper thus argues that the second half of the 1990s did see the transition to a moderate pluralism party system. The nature of “the transition” is thus specified and the (contested) term itself validated (Bull, 2012). It further argues that the consolidation of the new party system was weak. Several reasons are identified, including: Berlusconi’s anti-party politics, which hindered the institutionalisation of a liberal-conservative party; the self-interested conservatism of political elites and the “reform paradox”; the left’s reluctance to engage with the personalised nature of contemporary politics and its reluctance (together with the rump centrists) to reinforce the executive whilst the right was dominated by Berlusconi. As a consequence, the Second Republic did not bring the policy effectiveness that reformers had promised. In 2011, this led to the second failure of party government in Italy in 20 years and, thence, the substantial deconstruction of the new party system (Ceccarini, Diamanti & Lazar 2012; Bordignon, & Ceccarini (2013). The future of Italian government and party system structuration is, now, notoriously uncertain.

## **The Burden of the Past. Memories and Reassessment**

**Nick Carter**

### **Presente! Fascist Art in Contemporary Italy.**

Much has been written about the ‘relativisation’ and ‘normalisation’ of historical Fascism in Italy since the collapse of the ‘First’ Republic, the death of the old ‘anti-Fascist’ parties and the rise of the ‘new Right’. This paper explores a related but distinct theme: the survival, restoration and historicisation of Fascist art in contemporary Italy. The paper focuses on one particular work: Luigi Montanarini’s monumental Apotheosis of Fascism (Rome, 1936). The mural, in the aula magna of the Fascist Academy of Physical Education at the Foro Mussolini (now Foro Italico), was covered over at the end of World War Two. It remained hidden from view - and largely forgotten - for the next 50 years. In 1996, however, it was decided that the screen be removed and the mural restored. Today, the revitalised Apotheosis dominates the *salone d’onore* of CONI, the Italian National Olympic Committee. The paper examines the reasons behind that decision, and considers whether the recent trend in Italy towards viewing such art in purely historical or aesthetic terms reveals a country that has (finally) come to terms with its Fascist past.

**Giacomo Lichtner**

### **Memory Compromises and Compromised Memories: Rewriting WWII in Contemporary Italian Film.**

Between the Fiuggi turn and Luciano Violante’s maiden speech as Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies, a fundamental part Italy’s long crisis has been an identity crisis. With a Left orphaned of old certainties and a right rejuvenated by Berlusconi’s unorthodox mix of traditional conservative stalwarts and innovative strategies, the foundations of Italy’s post-war culture have come under a scrutiny as vigorous as that reserved to its political parties and institutions. This paper has the objective of inviting a conversation about how Italian historical cinema has traditionally dealt, and how it continues to deal, with the memory of the so-called Italian anomalies. Beginning with an analysis of recent revisionist TV-movies such as *Il Cuore nel Pozzo* and *Il Sangue dei Vinti*, the paper will argue that these texts and their context hold important clues to contemporary debates about historical memory, especially when they are placed in a comparative context and examined in the *longue-durée*.

Is their shallow and flawed construction of Italy's civil war an attempt at establishing a synthesis of Italy's 'divided memories'? And, if so, is the result a *memoria condivisa* or rather a *memoria compromessa*? These are questions that go beyond the representation of fascism's legacy but rather strike at the core of Italy's 'memory anomaly': that is the tendency to simultaneously address and defuse the lingering historic problems of modern Italy.

## **Liminal Identities and Collective Fears**

### **Gianni Silei**

#### **Italian fear: the roots of the Italian crisis.**

This paper will be focused on continuities and changes in the Italian collective fears. At the end of the sixties, at the height of the economic miracle and during a phase of great economic and social transformations, Italy plunged into a crisis that continued after the end of the western «golden age» throughout the 1970s also influencing the subsequent decades. Dealing with some of the major Italian collective fears emerged in the media and in the popular culture since the late sixties and comparing them with the more recent Italian social anxieties, this paper poses some general issues on various aspects of today's Italian crisis, which is determined by actual causes, both internal than international, but that is also inflated by a widespread sentiment of collective insecurity. Outlining this emotional landscape even in the light of some recent historiographical interpretations, this paper will also try to pose some central questions: when the Italian crisis actually began? This crisis started with Mani pulite and is a sort of consequence of "Berlusconi's era" or has been in some ways amplified by social anxiety determined by other factors such as the social and economic consequences of the process of modernization, the missed opportunities of the center-left governments and more in general the failure of the Italian reformism? Or is it rather a "long-term" crisis that, alternating dark moments with moments of hope and recovery, actually originated during the Italian nation-building process and continued unsolved after the unification of Italy: an «organic crisis», as Carlo Donolo wrote in the late 1970s quoting Antonio Gramsci, that has been perhaps also influenced by culture, society and the national identity, the 'character' itself of its people?

### **Franco Baldasso**

#### **A Mirror for Italy: Intellectuals in Trieste Facing the Collapse of Yugoslavia.**

In my paper I examine the intellectual responses to early 1990s post-Cold War political and cultural crisis by writers such as Claudio Magris, Adriano Sofri, Fulvio Tomizza, and Enzo Bettiza. I argue that in this period of transition, public intellectuals from the city of Trieste established a unique literary practice surpassing orientalist approaches to Eastern Europe. The city's transnational liminality, complex cultural legacy, and troubled memory are the framework for a sophisticated discourse that countered widespread western assumptions and interpreted the resurgence of repressed memories of violence during WWII. My goal is to assess the legacy of violence of past Italian imperialism in the Balkans, and the presence of dissenting memories, in a moment when international media were reporting the Italian crisis through frequent references to the collapse of Yugoslavia.

During the conflict, Trieste faced a conspicuous flux of volunteers, refugees and goods to and from the war sites on a daily basis. My paper argues that whereas other western commentators lamented a stark binary opposition between East and West, on the contrary intellectuals from the Italian city read a disquieting continuity, both in their personal and national history. Hence they deployed the trope of Yugoslavia as a mirror to understand the political and social developments of Italy in those years.

First introduced by Sofri in his reports from Bosnia, "Yugoslavia as a mirror" became a leading metaphor and a distinctive conceptual framework. Magris's *Microcosmi*, Tomizza's *Nel chiaro della notte*, and Bettiza's *Esilio* developed this trope for the radical defacement of national

narrative, through autobiographical and fictive accounts. These authors also elaborated a critical reconsideration of Italy's present vis-à-vis the definitive loss of an Orient that had traditionally strengthened Italy's proverbially weak national project. If the return to Europe was one of the political slogans that fueled interethnic hatred in former Yugoslavia during the war, the war itself reminded Italy the fragility of its European lifestyle.

### **Louise Zamparutti**

#### **Giorno del ricordo: a solution to the identity crisis of Italy's Second Republic.**

My paper analyzes the creation and implementation of Giorno del ricordo as a cultural representation of and attempted solution to the identity crisis of the Second Republic. I apply counterpublic theory to explain why annual commemorations of the foibe and the rhetoric of tragedy, loss and suffering that were once the domain of a marginalized group, the esuli, were adopted by the entire nation.

The existing literature does not address why the specific tragedy of the esuli was assumed by the whole country. Discourse on Giorno del ricordo focuses on either the ethnic-political-cultural polemic surrounding increased attention to the foibe (Valdevit, Pupo, Cernegoi and Kersevan represent merely a few contributors to this body of literature), or on the voices of the nationalistic right who positioned proposals to create this holiday in relation to international circumstances, most notably the collapse of Communism as a global power and the genocides of the Yugoslavian wars.

Counterpublic theory, defined by Fraser, Warner and Asen, assumes the Habermasian public sphere necessarily gives rise to various "subaltern counterpublics." Though Italy has always been a collection of counterpublics, the implementation of Giorno del ricordo brought the identity of one particular counterpublic, the esuli, to the national stage. My paper argues that adopting the autotelic counterpublic status of the esuli as an identity for the whole country allowed the newly formed political right to re-define Italy as a marginalized counterpublic within the European public sphere. Employing the narrative structure of the Holocaust, Giorno del ricordo recasts Italy as the unrecognized victim in World War II. This silences heterogeneous interpretations of the past, obscures Italy's uneasy relationship to Fascism and its aggressor role in World War II and forges a new Italian national identity.

### **Theatre and Television as Mirrors of the Crisis**

#### **Armando Rotondi**

#### **The "theatralization" of the crisis in the dialectic between Dario Fo, Beppe Grillo and Gianroberto Casaleggio.**

In the last 20 years, during the so-called period of the berlusconismo, new form of politics and new reality of the Movimento5Stelle, created by Beppe Grillo and Gianroberto Casaleggio, have risen in Italy, reaching an essential role after the 2013 election. Aim of this paper is to show how, with Beppe Grillo's activities, the teatro della politica has began a teatro della crisi both in the use of a theatrical language and contemporary dramatic expression, renewing completely the idea of the political performance and collective ritual. In this way, the Movimento5Stelle and Beppe Grillo in particular do not use only new technologies (such as blogs), but also forms of direct communication. The crisis of the first 10 years of berlusconismo, has already analyzed, from a theatrical perspective, by Nobel laureate Dario Fo, in his portrait of Silvio Berlusconi titled *L'anomalo bicefalo* (2004). Dario Fo has become one of the noble and intellectual fathers of the Movimento5Stelle, having being invited regularly to the events of the movement. Beppe Grillo, entertainer and then political activist, has theatralized and dramatized the crisis with forms of one-man show events and others similar to theatre happenings, such as the V-Day, where the performance component was essential. The dialectic between Dario Fo and the two founders of the movements, Beppe Grillo and Gianroberto

Casaleggio, is evident in the book *Il Grillo canta sempre al tramonto*. Edited by Fo, the book is not a real dialogue among the authors, but, after a deep analysis, it is constructed as a theatrical play where the chapters are more similar to acts, the sub-chapters to scenes; there are also “stage directions” and theatre is more than a simple metaphor for the Italian crisis.

**Vanessa Roghi**

### **Iconografia televisiva e luoghi comuni.**

Spesso ho lavorato sulle ricorrenze lessicali presenti nell’archivio della Rai Radio televisione Italiana, le Teche, archivio visionabile esclusivamente dall’interno dell’azienda e quindi di difficile accesso per gli studiosi. Recentemente, ad esempio, ho potuto verificare come la parola operaio cambiasse significato nel corso degli anni settanta accostandosi sempre più frequentemente a espressioni come violenza, conflitto, crisi.

Mi sono soffermata su quest’ultima parola dunque: crisi. Cercando di capire quando e in quali momenti la tv italiana l’ha usata, se, nel suo impiego, le periodizzazioni proposte dalla storia politica si sono rispecchiate nel linguaggio della comunicazione di massa, se l’agenda politica e quella dei media abbiano coinciso in modo banale o abbiano presentato sorprendenti contraddizioni fra di loro. Durante la crisi petrolifera, fra il 1973 e il 1974 la parola crisi è stata usata 47 volte, nella descrizione di programmi nazionali. Negli anni che segnano la fine della spinta progressiva degli anni Settanta, fra il 1978 e il 1979, l’uso della parola crisi è salito a 107 ricorrenze. Nel decennio che inizia con la marcia dei quarantamila e si chiude con tangentopoli, fra il 1980 e il 1992 465 volte, ma fra il 1990 e il 1994, ovvero in soli quattro anni ritorna per 455 volte. Fra il 1994 e il 2014 l’uso della parola ha corrisposto a 6.965 ricorrenze nei programmi nazionali, 76.305 nei telegiornali, 87.233 nei Tg regionali.

L’intento di questo paper è quello di offrire una prospettiva di analisi qualitativa a questi dati mettendo in evidenza i luoghi dell’informazione nei quali si è creato il discorso pubblico sulla crisi, le sue retoriche e soprattutto, trattandosi di televisione, la sua iconografia.

Il paper sarà accompagnato da un video.

**Daniele Salerno**

### **The (Televised) Birth of ‘Grillismo’.**

On the 25th of November 1993, 15 millions of Italians watch on RAI1 Beppe Grillo Show, which marks both the return of the showman to Italian public television after four years of ostracism and also his last TV appearance before the success of Grillo’s political movement in the 00s. What I argue in my contribution is that the Beppe Grillo Show represents the first sketch (what in the Italian commedia dell’arte is called *canovaccio*) of a discursive and theatrical machine that will be developed and empowered in the following 20 years: enacted in hundreds of *mise-en-scene*, the show gradually turns from being a theatre performance adapted for TV into a political rally to be held in Italian city squares. The main aim of my paper is to analyse that “matrix-show” as the act of birth of what is called in Italy today *Grillismo*, by focussing in particular on two elements: the reconfiguration of the relation between front stage and back stage; the strategic construction of different audiences, within the Grillo’s discourse. I contend that these discursive and rhetorical devices have been taken to the political domain and structure the ways in which Grillo and his supporters organize their communication. From a methodological point of view, my contribution draws on socio-semiotic approaches (Eric Landowski and Erving Goffman). Semiotics will be used as filter of translation that will help us in creating a dialogue between political communication studies, humour studies and performance studies, as the Grillo phenomenon asked to do in order to be fully understood.