

ASMI POSTGRADUATE SYMPOSIUM

25th and 26th November 2020

ASMI

ASSOCIATION FOR THE
STUDY OF MODERN ITALY

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WEDNESDAY 25TH NOVEMBER 2020:

*All times are GMT

11:15-11:25: Opening remarks

11:30-12:00: *Transnational Political Influences*

- Maeva Le Roy, *European University Institute, Florence*. 'Un'indagine sull'esprit public in Italia napoleonica (1805-1814)'.

Chair: Maria del Buono (University of Birmingham)

12-12:55: *Transnationality and Nation-building during the Risorgimento*

- Zoe Lauri, *European University Institute, Florence*. 'Reframing Italian Science: Experts' Mobility and Knowledge Circulation in the Nineteenth Century. The Case of Felice Giordano and the Italian Mining Corps'.
- Stefano Lissi, *Utrecht University*. 'Italia und Germania: the idea of the existence of a "shared fate" between the Italian and German processes of national unification in Italian public discourse (1848-1871)'.

Chair: Conor Broughton (University of Lincoln)

1-2 Break

2-2:55: *Italian Institutions: democratization and transnational practices*

- Flavia Carmen Di Pasqua, *University of Trento*. 'Spaces, Ideas and Democracy Practices: comparing republican experiences in the early XIX century'.
- Marco Tarallo, *University of Florence and Siena*. 'Republican Italy in the Mirror of the University: the sidelong case of the Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa (1964-1977)'.

Chair: Lauren Jones (University of Birmingham)

3-3:55: *Imperialistic Discourse and Colonial Representations*

- Pietro Dalmazzo, *University of Durham*. ‘Pre-Fascist Italian Imperialistic Discourse: How Italian Literature Shaped the Eastern Adriatic in the Years Before the First World War’.
- Nikolaos Mavropoulos, *European University Institute*. ‘Early Italy’s Fixation with Colonies: The First Geographic-Exploration-Colonial Societies and the Notion of “Africanismo”’.

Chair: Conor Broughton (University of Lincoln)

4-4:55: *Transnational Perceptions: relations between Italy and the United Kingdom*

- Simone Battaglia, *Sapienza University of Rome*. ‘Uno sguardo britannico su Aldo Moro (1963-1978): «an astute and patient politician»’.
- Remigio Petrocelli, *University of Dundee*. ‘Italian-Scots and the Abyssinian war (1935-36)’.

Chair: Lauren Jones (University of Birmingham)

5-6 Keynote speaker: Dr Gianluca Fantoni, Nottingham Trent University. ‘Italian Studies, where do we go from here?’

THURSDAY 26TH NOVEMBER 2020:

10-11: Keynote speaker: Dr Amy King, University of Bristol. "We die everywhere for Italy": Commemoration of Fascist Martyrs in New York and Naples during Mussolini's Early Rule.

11-11:55: *Political Collaborations and Allegiances during the Fascist Era*

- Blasco Sciarrino, *Central European University, Vienna/Budapest.* 'Allegiance in Exchange for Benefits: The Convergence between Nationalist Great War Veterans and Fascism in Italy, 1919-1925'.
- Alberto Murru, *Newcastle University.* 'Le polizie dell'Asse'. Police Collaboration between Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany'.

Chair: Lauren Jones (University of Birmingham)

12-12:55: *Modes of Remembrance and Representations of War*

- Fabio Simonetti, *University of Reading / IWM.* 'Sicilians between Invasion and Liberation: An Oral History Investigation over Memory Dissonances of the Allied Landings in Sicily, 10 July 1943'.
- Carlo Moll, *University of Cambridge.* 'Between La Bella Morte and the Mass Grave: the (an)-aesthetics of death in Italian literature of the Great War'.

Chair: Denise Wesley (University of Birmingham)

1-2 Break

2-2:55: *The Italian Economy: exploring changes to labour and consumerism*

- Silvia Pizzirani, *University of Bologna.* 'Citizen-Consumers and Enterprises Facing the Crisis of the Seventies'.
- Francesco Maccelli, *University of Florence and Siena.* 'Studying Labour Skills Using HISCO-Based Measures: Italy, 1871-2011'.

Chair: Conor Broughton (University of Lincoln)

3-3:55: *Aesthetic Discourse: the interconnection between art and politics*

- Natasha Bishop, *Syracuse University, New York*. 'Scritta sulla sabbia: An Encyclopedic Reading of Dadamaino's Mute H'.
- Victoria Skelton, *Auburn University*. 'Projecting a Modern Nation: The National Council of Women of Italy and the Politics of Divorcing 'Italian Style'.

Chair: Maria Elena Alampi (University of Birmingham)

4-5: *Research Posters and Video-Essays Discussion, followed by Closing Remarks*

Chair: Conor Broughton (University of Lincoln)

Research Posters and Video-Essays:

- Maria Elena Alampi, *University of Birmingham*. 'Framing Precarity on the Big Screen through Gender Representations in Italian Cinema'.

View poster here:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1o0YkZR55BXROZ5fDzBg22mGkqzXuDsiS/view?usp=sharing>

- Lauren Jones, *University of Birmingham*. 'Precarity and Empathy in Italian Migration Cinema: Cover Boy: L'ultima Rivoluzione and Fiore Gemello'.

View video-essay here: <https://vimeo.com/478841684>

- Thomas Lockwood, *University of Liverpool*. 'A Re-Evaluation of Italian Critical Response to Poliziesco all'Italiana'.

View video-essay here: <https://vimeo.com/482253016>

- Simona Scanni, *University of Birmingham*. 'Effectiveness of Online Language Learning: a case study of Italian as a foreign language'.

View poster here: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xkLTsFc0o_tnsU_vOoGPWdG0IGh84V80/view?usp=sharing

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Download Discord <https://discordapp.com/> and join our server <https://discord.gg/n9WnCBZn3F> to discuss the symposium and connect with other postgraduate students.

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A NOTE FROM THE ORGANISERS

We would like to thank everyone who has contributed to this symposium. We are thrilled to have received so many interesting papers which reflect the diverse and interdisciplinary nature of Italian Studies. We would also like to give special thanks to Dr Gianluca Fantoni and Dr Amy King for taking time to share their research with us.

This year has brought a variety of challenges for all as we have adjusted to the new “normal”. Unfortunately, this meant that the 2020 ASMI Postgraduate Summer School had to be deferred, however ASMI hopes to resume the tradition of an in-person postgraduate summer school in 2021. In the meantime, we hope that the virtual Postgraduate Symposium will provide a welcoming and supportive environment for postgraduate students to present their research and to engage with fellow researchers.

We take this opportunity to encourage postgraduate students to apply for the **ASMI Postgraduate Essay Prize** and the **Christopher Duggan Postgraduate Travel Bursaries**, details of which can be found on the website <http://www.asmi.org.uk/postgraduates/>

We look forward to welcoming you to the symposium,

Conor and Lauren.

About the organisers:

Conor Broughton obtained a BA and MA in History at the University of Lincoln, in 2017 and 2018 respectively. He is currently a PhD student, under Pietro Di Paola, at the University of Lincoln in the school of History and Heritage. His research focuses on *opera buffa* and the matrix of nationalism, popular culture, and the everyday in *Risorgimento* Italy. By using the under-represented medium of *opera buffa*, his research aims to question the popularity of nationalism during the *Risorgimento*, and

early nation-hood, and add to discussion of the role of culture in disseminating nationalist thought.

Contact: 12381074@students.lincoln.ac.uk

Lauren Jones obtained a BA in Ancient History and Italian Studies at the University of Birmingham in 2011. Following this, she completed a MA in Italian Studies at Georgetown University in 2015. She is currently a PhD student at the University of Birmingham in the Department of Modern Languages and is funded by the Wolfson Foundation. Her research focuses on the representation of immigration in Italian cinema in relation to emotion, politics, and identity. By analysing cinematic mechanisms of emotional engagement in relation to socio-political narratives her research aims to contribute to discussions on cinematic ethics and *impegno*.

Contact: LXJ799@student.bham.ac.uk

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

DR GIANLUCA FANTONI, *NOTTINGHAM TRENT UNIVERSITY*. 'ITALIAN STUDIES, WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?'

Dr Gianluca Fantoni has been teaching Italian language and culture for 7 years at Nottingham Trent University. However, he will soon move to history as NTU has dropped the degree in Modern languages. In his talk, Dr Fantoni will firstly address the crisis of Modern language in British Academia. He will argue that scholars holding a PhD degree in Italian Studies can survive a progressively hostile environment by making themselves "marketable" (inverted commas!). He will then move on to discuss his new research. This seeks to redress the imbalance within existing historiography about the Jewish Brigade Group, and to impact on the Italian political landscape by contributing to the resolution of a new controversy: the harsh and protracted dispute regarding the presence of the Jewish Brigade Group colours at the 25 April parade.

Dr Fantoni gained a PhD in 2013 in Twentieth Century Italian History / Cultural Studies / Film Studies. His doctoral thesis is entitled 'Red Screens: The Cinematographic Production of the Italian Communist Party (1946 – 1979)'. His doctoral research concerned the production of propaganda films and documentaries by the Italian Communist Party (PCI) between 1946 and 1979. The research focused simultaneously on the historical and political context, the specific production context, the film texts and their critical and popular reception. Dr Fantoni has an MPhil (by research) on the political and social entrenchment of the Italian Communist Party in the upper Valdarno, a small area in central Tuscany, between the 1940s and the 1970s. His Tesi di laurea (vecchio ordinamento) at the University of Florence focused on the CGIL (Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro) the communist-socialist trade union. Dr Fantoni's current research areas are: History of the Italian left, Italian post-war cinema, the use of cinematic texts in historical research, the public and political use of history.

DR AMY KING, *UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL*. "WE DIE EVERYWHERE FOR ITALY": COMMEMORATION OF FASCIST MARTYRS IN NEW YORK AND NAPLES DURING MUSSOLINI'S EARLY RULE.

On 30 May 1927, a group of Fascist Blackshirts set off from their homes in the Bronx to participate in the Memorial Day parade. Shortly after, two of the party were killed by anti-fascists on the stairs of the Third Avenue Railway. The clash created the first Italian American Fascist martyrs; their bodies lay in state at the local *fascio* in the Bronx for several days and their funeral included a parade through the streets of New York. Signifiers of Italian and North American national identity were present throughout; this was a transnational event. Through an examination of ceremonies held in Italy and the U.S., including the journey of the bodies back to Italy, this research adds a transnational element to the study of the role of secular martyrdom in the construction of collective identity under Fascism. Far from weakening the symbolic power of the deaths, the transnational quality of public commemoration strengthened the meaning that could be derived from the martyrological narrative, suggesting that sacrifice had occurred in the name of ideological values that transcended national borders and forming part of Mussolini's early imperial rhetoric.

Dr King's research examines the role of secular martyrs in the construction of Italian identity. Martyrs have played a key role in the construction of Italian national identity, especially in the wake of national violence, making these stories crucial for our understanding of how the nation and its subjects understand their history and identity. She is currently writing her first monograph, provisionally titled 'Politics of Sacrifice: Remembering Italy's 1973 Rogo di Primavalle', which considers the ways in which memory of the 1973 arson attack has been incorporated into neo-fascist identity from the Movimento Sociale Italiano to CasaPound. She is also interested in transnational memory cultures. Her forthcoming article 'The Battle for Influence: Memory of Transnational Martyrs in the U.S. Italian Diaspora Under Fascism' analyses commemoration of the Italian antifascist Giacomo Matteotti and the Blackshirts Giuseppe Carisi and Michele Ambrosoli, who were killed in New York, and proposes the concept of the transnational martyr.

ABSTRACTS OF PAPERS PRESENTED

MEAVA LE ROY, *EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE, FLORENCE.*

"UN'INDAGINE SULL'ESPRIT PUBLIC IN ITALIA NAPOLEONICA (1805-1814)".

Un'inchiesta sull'esprit public ha accompagnato la creazione della Prima Repubblica francese nel settembre 1792. La soggettività del concetto invita a interrogare il senso che gli è stato attribuito dai diversi amministratori, così come gli strumenti utilizzati per oggettivarlo.

Questa indagine è stata portata avanti negli anni successivi, durante i quali gli amministratori locali sono incaricati di redigere rapporti amministrativi sull'esprit public. Tale politica proseguì peraltro durante l'Impero napoleonico e fu applicata anche ai dipartimenti annessi e ai territori sotto dominazione francese. L'"esportazione" di tale pratica al di fuori dei confini della Repubblica francese consente di mettere in discussione le conseguenze della circolazione transnazionale della categoria amministrativa dell'esprit public.

In questo intervento propongo uno studio del modo in cui l'indagine sull'esprit public è stata sperimentata nell'Italia settentrionale. La mia analisi prenderà in esame alcune aree italiane in cui tale politica è stata applicata in modo difforme: da una parte, verranno studiati i rapporti di polizia compilati dai prefetti francesi sull'esprit public nei tre dipartimenti di Genova, degli Appennini e del Taro – tutti annessi all'Impero; dall'altra, verranno analizzati i simili rapporti che furono redatti nel Regno d'Italia da amministratori italiani (sotto la cui penna la categoria diventò spirito pubblico) nello stesso periodo. In tal modo, la mia comunicazione evidenzierà le differenze e le analogie tra l'esprit public e la sua ridefinizione da parte degli amministratori italiani. Interrogarsi sugli usi di tale categoria in questi due casi permette di fare luce sul modo in cui gli amministratori hanno percepito la società a cui le loro inchieste erano rivolte, in una situazione di dominazione imperiale napoleonica.

Meava Le Roy ha studiato storia e scienze politiche all'Università di Strasburgo, occupandomi per la sua tesi di storia politica e amministrativa della Rivoluzione francese. Lei è attualmente iscritta al quarto anno di dottorato all'EUI (Firenze). La sua ricerca riguarda la politica di esprit public sperimentata tra il 1792 e il 1814 in Francia e la sua graduale applicazione ai territori annessi. In particolare, Meava studia il caso dei dipartimenti del Nord Italia, appartenuti all'Impero napoleonico e al Regno d'Italia. Lei interessa soprattutto agli effetti della circolazione transnazionale della categoria esprit

public, che diventa spirito pubblico quando utilizzata nel Regno d'Italia. / Meava Le Roy has studied history and political science at the University, dealing in her thesis with political and administrative history of the French Revolution. She is currently enrolled in the fourth year of my PhD at the EUI (Florence). Her research concerns the politics of esprit public policy experienced between 1792 and 1814 in France and its gradual application to the annexed territories. In particular, Meava studies the case of the districts of Northern Italy, which belonged to the Napoleonic Empire and the Kingdom of Italy. She is particularly interested in the effects of the transnational circulation of the esprit public category, which becomes a public spirit when used in the Kingdom of Italy.

MARCO GABBAS, *UNIVERSITY OF MILAN*. ‘THE INFLUENCE OF MAOISM AND OF CHINESE COMMUNISM ON THE ITALIAN LEFT, 1949-1976’.

Italian Maoism has been largely neglected in scholarship. The reasons for this are probably a few long-standing clichés. Italian Maoism was supposedly insignificant, nothing but a grotesque, unserious imitation of Chinese Maoism. After three years of research at the Archive of the Feltrinelli Foundation in Milan, however, I claim that these clichés should be largely reconsidered. Maoism did not influence much the traditional Left, composed of the Communist (PCI) and Socialist (PSI) parties, but it had an enormous, almost totalising influence on the extra-parliamentary Left. The Italian extra-parliamentary Left, alternatively called Italian extreme Left or Italian New Left, never managed to take power neither through parliamentary nor through revolutionary means, but it had thousands of militants, many newspapers and magazines. Moreover, its most radical fringes tried to take state power through violent means. About the “grotesque” cliché, it probably comes from the Maoist organisation “Servire il popolo.” However, the world of Italian Maoism was much larger. The paper will show many inputs Italian radicals took from Maoism and how they were re-elaborated in a specific way, from the concept of leading state to the non-neutrality of science. Finally, I will show that the Maoist concept of revolutionary violence jumped the “end of history” and allowed the short-lived existence of the new Red Brigades at the turn of the 21st century.

Marco Gabbas holds a BA in Translation and an MA in Comparative Contemporary History from CEU. He is currently finishing a PhD at the University of Milan (The Influence of Maoism and of Chinese Communism on the Italian Left, 1949-1976). He is a contemporary historian of the international communist movement. He has so far published on Soviet and Latin American Communism, and on the relations between Latin American Communism and the Italian Left. He has given lectures in Italy, Rumania and Hungary on Italian Maoism, on Gramsci and the Southern question and on Camilo Torres.

ZOE LAURI, *EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE, FLORENCE*.
'REFRAMING ITALIAN SCIENCE: EXPERTS' MOBILITY AND
KNOWLEDGE CIRCULATION IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY. THE
CASE OF FELICE GIORDANO AND THE ITALIAN MINING CORPS'.

The history of Italian sciences during the Risorgimento has been traditionally told as enclosed into the national context and detached from wider networks of mobility and knowledge circulation. Therefore, nineteenth-century Italian scientific inquiry appears as an 'alterity' when compared to its 'conventional' British, French, or German equivalents. However, this narrative limits our understanding of these disciplines and the cultural context in which they developed. I argue that Italian science was shaped by, and shaped, a particular idea of Italy and of economic and civic progress, where practical reasons such as the search for natural resources and issues of national legitimation played a crucial role. In particular, I propose to look at earth and field sciences, which are indeed part of a reflection on the usefulness of science for improving societies from an evolutionary perspective. On one side, Italian earth sciences should be reframed on the basis of global networks of knowledge circulation and experts' mobility. On the other side, the production of knowledge in this field should be investigated in relation to the specificity of the Italian environment and distinctive cultures of nature. In the paper I am proposing, I will present the results of my last research mission focusing on the case study of the Piedmontese engineer Felice Giordano, a member of the Italian Mining Corps who was involved for most of his life and career in local and overseas explorations for both practical and study purposes.

Zoe is a second-year PhD researcher at the Department of History and Civilization of the European University Institute (Florence). She holds a bachelor's degree in Philosophy from the University of Florence and a Master's degree with honours in Philosophical Sciences from the University of Bologna with a thesis in History of Science. Recently awarded a Master of Research, she is the coordinator of the EUI Working group in History of Science. Her research project investigates the production and circulation of knowledge on Italian earth and environmental sciences in the nineteenth century and their connection with the process of nation-building.

STEFANO LISSI, *UTRECHT UNIVERSITY*. ‘ITALIA UND GERMANIA: THE IDEA OF THE EXISTENCE OF A "SHARED FATE" BETWEEN THE ITALIAN AND GERMAN PROCESSES OF NATIONAL UNIFICATION IN ITALIAN PUBLIC DISCOURSE (1848-1871)’.

Two elements are usually required for two political entities to consider themselves allies: shared interests and a shared enemy. Between 1848 and 1871, many among the ranks of the Italian national movement felt that the German and Italian national causes possessed both elements. It was believed that both nationalities aimed at the unification of their respective countries and were both being obstructed in this by the Habsburg Empire. Consequently, a “shared fate” was envisioned for the two nationalities: Germans and Italians were seen as “natural allies” destined to forge their national unifications together by collaborating against the Habsburgs. Such an idea of a fundamental commonality of destinies between the two national causes experienced a widespread diffusion in the discourse of the Risorgimento, often entering the political vocabulary of official relations between the two nationalities. However, historiography has until now overlooked this idea, taking its existence mostly for granted and leaving the idea itself, its cultural origins, and its diffusion unproblematized. This paper fills this lacuna by highlighting how such a concept made its way in the political vocabulary of the Italian national movement and was used to foster political action. Consequently, this paper not only sheds new light on a crucial episode of the history of relations between the Italian and German world but also provides a powerful portrait of the element of transnationality of the Risorgimento.

Stefano Lissi graduated from the Research Master History at Utrecht University in 2020, with the thesis “Italia und Germania: The idea of the existence of a “shared fate” between the Italian and German processes of national unification (1848-1871)”. His research is mainly focused on the study of the Risorgimento from a European perspective. Other research interests of his include: cultural history of Europe during the 19th century; history of nationalisms from a transnational perspective; history of Italian colonialism.

FLAVIA CARMEN DI PASQUA, *UNIVERSITY OF TRENTO*. ‘SPAZI, IDEE E PRATICHE DI DEMOCRAZIA. ESPERIENZE REPUBBLICANE DI METÀ OTTOCENTO A CONFRONTO’.

Questo articolo intende sondare nelle sue connessioni meno esplorate e secondo un’ottica transnazionale le piste percorse dal costituzionalismo democratico nel tornante rivoluzionario del 1848-49; argomento questo in buona parte posto ai margini del dibattito storiografico e che invece, grazie alle suggestioni proposte dalla più recente storiografia che indaga il dipanarsi dei flussi migratori degli esuli attraverso le rotte della parola scritta e parlata su scala europea, riteniamo che possa rivelarsi campo fecondo per verificare l’ipotesi di una diffusione circolare di modelli costituzionali su scala transnazionale. La verifica di tale ipotesi ci pare ancor più stimolante se condotta a partire da un caso studio subnazionale come quello della Repubblica Romana del 1849. Tale esperienza potrà intendersi dunque come tassello di un mosaico più ampio ma anche come precipitato di vite, aspettative e progetti istituzionali e costituzionali di uomini da riconoscere non più, e non soltanto, come animatori di un percorso ‘italiano’ verso la costituzione democratica bensì come attori di un movimento sovranazionale più complesso e interconnesso verso la Democrazia. A partire allora da un’analisi attenta di quelle culture costituzionali circolanti sul continente e oltremare, con particolare riguardo all’esperienza del Quarantotto francese – parigino e provinciale – elemento di forte interesse ci parrebbe quello di esperire nella pratica costituzionale dei costituenti romani quanto e come tali esperienze diversificate e parallele, se non concorrenti, siano state recepite come modello, nel quadro complesso e plurale del discorso culturale sulla costituzione che a partire dagli anni Trenta dell’Ottocento iniziava pur timidamente ad animare la scena politica internazionale.

This paper aims to analyse the routes of the democratic constitutionalism in their deep connections during the great biennium 1848-49. Even though the historical debate marginalized this subject, in our opinion, it could represent a prolific field fit for the purpose of verifying the hypothesis of a circular diffusion of constitutional models on a transnational scale thanks to new suggestions offered by the recent historiography about the exiles’ migratory flows on the routes of the international cultural politics. To this end, the experience of the Roman Republic of 1849 may be an interesting ‘subnational’ case study. Therefore we should consider the roman constitutional experience as the tile of a more complex mosaic of lives, expectations, and institutional and constitutional projects conceived by men who were not just protagonists of an ‘Italian path’ but also of a broader supranational movement, in a large net of interconnections towards democracy. Consequently, this study starts from a

careful analysis of the constitutional cultures circulating on the continent and overseas (with special regard to the French case of 1848, in Paris and in the smaller provinces), and its strong point comes from the analysis of constitutional practice experimented by the roman constituents. The purpose is to understand how and to what extent these different experiences were recognized as a model by the constituents, always keeping in mind that the cultural discourse about the constitution that animated the international political debate from the early Thirties of the XIX century was very complex and deeply plural.

Flavia Carmen Di Pasqua is a Ph.D. student in History of Political Institutions at the University of Trento with a project about the Roman Republic of 1849 and the democrats' constitutional culture during the XIX century under the supervision of Prof. Anna Gianna Manca. She graduated with full mark and honour in the MA course in History at the University of Turin in 2019 with the thesis "Between Crown and Parliament. The Albertin Statut put to the test (1848-1854)" under the supervision of Prof. Antonio Chiavistelli. Today she keeps collaborating with Prof. Antonio Chiavistelli's chair of History of Political Institutions.

MARCO TARALLO, *UNIVERSITY OF FLORENCE AND SIENA*.
'REPUBLICAN ITALY IN THE MIRROR OF THE UNIVERSITY: THE
SIDELONG CASE OF THE SCUOLA NORMALE SUPERIORE DI PISA
(1964-1977)'

In 1964 the international physicist Gilberto Bernardini became director of the Scuola Normale Superiore of Pisa. His appointment was the result of an agreement between the professors of the Pisan university and the Minister of Education, Luigi Gui. The aim was twofold: to create a center for the production of highly educated personnel, within the framework of the formation of a new modern society governed by the collaboration between the Christian Democratic Party and the Socialists; and, keeping in mind the radical twisting capacity of the Normale during the Russo leadership (1944-1948), depoliticizing one of the eminent places of this production. The long Bernardini direction (1964-1977) marked the potential and limits of this project, accompanying the state in two decades of governance of education and culture. While the Scuola Normale experienced a phase of great scientific and didactic expansion, on the other it did so at the price of the precariousness of ministerial support, and at the cost of isolation from the national university system. The construction of a center of high culture came into conflict with the transformations of the Italian university and society, with the introduction of the masses into the education system and the need to access knowledge and professionalism. Faced with all this, the School preserved its level and gained new insertion in an international academic circuit, at the cost of alienation from the country's aspirations and problems. How much this transfer was complete or partial is the subject of this report. With a question: what legitimacy for an elite educational institution in the heart of an Italy on its way to democracy?

Marco Tarallo is alumnus of the Scuola Normale Superiore of Pisa and PhD student in Historical Studies at the University of Florence-Siena. He also studied at the École Normale Supérieure de la rue d'Ulm (Paris) and followed seminars at SciencePo and the Sant'Anna School of Higher Studies (Pisa). His study interests concern the university in the twentieth century, the history of the Church in the contemporary age and Italian political history. His doctoral project concerns elite universities and democratization at the time of the mass university (1968-1980).

PIETRO DALMAZZO, *UNIVERSITY OF DURHAM*. 'PRE-FASCIST ITALIAN IMPERIALISTIC DISCOURSE: HOW ITALIAN LITERATURE SHAPED THE EASTERN ADRIATIC IN THE YEARS BEFORE THE FIRST WORLD WAR'

Although Italian colonialism born late and died early, the Italian colonial ambitions emerged promptly after the process of unification. The eastern Adriatic constituted one of the areas subjected to the Italian expansionist policies. Those policies, evolved in the first decade of the 20th century through diplomacy and attempts to develop political and cultural influence, accompanied a literary production about this region constituted by journalistic reportages, geographical and ethnographic accounts of travel and explorations. This literature, mainly published in the years before the 1st World War, covered a role in legitimizing and giving literary consistency to the Italian expansionist discourse towards eastern Adriatic.

The paper aims to analyse the Italian literature about eastern Adriatic, produced during the liberal period, to understand the presence of a colonial attitude within the authors, and to look at how this attitude was legitimated and deployed through their texts. Secondly, it focuses on the comprehensive narration developed about eastern Adriatic, which constituted the basis of the subsequent colonial representation of these territories during the Fascist period. The paper will investigate these issues evaluating how this region was perceived and discursively constructed in colonial terms, focusing on which narrative and descriptive patterns were involved into the literary representation of eastern Adriatic social and territorial spaces. The paper seeks to develop this analysis through a focus on the works of two authors: Vico Mantegazza, a Journalist who worked as a reporter from the Balkans and the African colonies, and Antonio Baldacci, a geographer, botanist and ethnographer who focused mainly on the Balkan region.

Pietro Dalmazzo is a second year PhD student in Italian studies at the University of Durham funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council's Northern Bridge scholarship. He earned his Master's Degree in World History at the University of Bologna. His research project looks at the representation of Italian expansionism under Fascism, specifically on the ways in which eastern Adriatic was constructed discursively by the Italian culture during the regime.

NIKOLAOS MAVROPOULOS, *EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE*.
'EARLY ITALY'S FIXATION WITH COLONIES; THE FIRST
GEOGRAPHIC-EXPLORATION-COLONIAL SOCIETIES AND THE
NOTION OF "AFRICANISMO"'.

One possible alternative to emigration to the Americas was to establish colonies under governmental control, which would absorb the surplus population. The demographic-migration issue was to become a key alibi in Rome's effort to take colonies, in which Italians were promised cultivable land, opportunities, stature and social advancement. The channeling of the surplus population in other areas constituted one of the pillars of the Italian colonial policy and reinforced by extension the rhetoric linking the demographic issue with the quest for colonies. This justification of Italian colonialism as an alternative solution to the population problem had a more logical basis compared to the potential economic and raw material benefits of Africa.

Nikolaos Mavropoulos has studied Balkan studies (BA) and European History (MA) in Greece. In 2014 he was awarded with Sapienza University's PhD fellowship for Foreign Nationals educated abroad. As a PhD candidate he carried out his research project, entitled 'The Japanese expansionism in Asia and the Italian expansion in Africa: A comparative study of the early Italian and the early Japanese colonialism (1868-1901)'. In September 2019 he received his doctoral degree from Sapienza University of Rome, Department of History, Culture, Religion (Dipartimento di Storia Culture Religioni). His research interests revolve around Imperial antagonisms, colonialism and Japanese contemporary and modern history. He is currently investigating the Greek minorities in Africa in the 19th century.

SIMONE BATTAGLIA, *SAPIENZA UNIVERSITY OF ROME*. ‘UNO SGUARDO BRITANNICO SU ALDO MORO (1963-1978): «AN ASTUTE AND PATIENT POLITICIAN»/A BRITISH PERSPECTIVE TOWARDS ALDO MORO (1963-1978): «AN ASTUTE AND PATIENT POLITICIAN»’.

Con l'intervento si intende proporre un'analisi della percezione britannica della figura di Aldo Moro, nelle vesti di presidente del Consiglio e di ministro degli Affari esteri, oltre che del ruolo che svolse (e dell'immagine che ne scaturì) nel lungo processo di adesione della Gran Bretagna alla Comunità economica europea. Definito a più riprese astuto e perspicace, dalla ferma integrità e dall'intelligenza penetrante, ne è emerso un ritratto articolato e molto spesso positivo, alternato raramente a giudizi negativi misti a considerazioni improntate a certo scetticismo. I britannici sollevano rimarcare spesso il forte legame che avevano con l'Italia, in particolare con Moro, del quale apprezzarono oltremisura l'impegno profuso in favore dell'ingresso del Regno Unito nelle istituzioni comunitarie; in tal senso si distinsero i conservatori (dei quali per giunta fu evidenziata in più occasioni la vocazione europeista; di contro, la posizione laburista nei confronti della Cee fu sempre altalenante) quali, ad esempio, Geoffrey Rippon e Alexander Douglas-Home. Procedendo oltre, notiamo come siano stati seguiti in modo accorato anche gli eventi legati al cosiddetto caso Moro: si segnalano, in particolar modo, gli articoli apparsi sul Times a firma di Peter Nichols, corrispondente del giornale da Roma, o gli stessi fascicoli sulle organizzazioni terroristiche in Italia, conservati negli archivi di Kew Gardens. In conclusione, il profilo che ne tracciarono i britannici appare significativo e dai tratti ben marcati; oltretutto, a prescindere dall'organizzazione di appartenenza, dimostrarono spesso profonda conoscenza della politica e della società italiane, che permise loro di offrirne rappresentazioni non di comodo.

Simone Battaglia ha venticinque anni e, nel 2019, ha conseguito, con il massimo dei voti e la lode, la laurea in Scienze storiche presso la Sapienza Università di Roma, dove ha inoltre ottenuto un master di II livello in Istituzioni parlamentari con la votazione di 110/110. Nello stesso ateneo è stato risultato vincitore del concorso del 36° ciclo per l'ammissione al dottorato in Studi politici, che inizierà a breve. Nella prima metà del 2020 è stato coinvolto in qualità di ricercatore nel progetto dell'Edizione Nazionale dell'Epistolario di Alcide De Gasperi, del quale ha curato la parte relativa agli archivi britannici./ Simone Battaglia is twenty-five years old and, in 2019, he obtained, with full marks and honours, a degree in Historical Sciences at the Sapienza University of Rome, where he also obtained a II level master's degree in Parliamentary Institutions with a grade of 110 / 110. At the same university, he was the winner of the 36th cycle competition for admission to the doctorate in

Political Studies, which he will start shortly. In the first half of 2020 he was involved as a researcher in the project of the National Edition of Alcide De Gasperi's Letters, of which he edited the part relating to the British archives.

REMIGIO PETROCELLI, *UNIVERSITY OF DUNDEE*. 'ITALIAN-SCOTS AND THE ABYSSINIAN WAR (1935-36)'.

This paper which draws on various Italian and British contemporary primary sources – including circulars, MI5 reports, and newspaper articles – focuses on the reaction of Italian fascists and, more generally, of the Italian communities in Scotland to the Ethiopian war (October 1935 until May 1936). This topic forms part of a wider PhD project that looks at the fascist clubs established in Scotland during the interwar period (1922-1940), and which examines the relationship between Italian fascist emigrants and Scottish society. The aims of this paper are: to shed new light on how Italians, fascists and not, and Scots reacted to the outbreak of the Abyssinian war. In the course of this analysis I explore how British and Italian propaganda shaped public opinion and impacted upon the livelihood of Italian-Scots. I will also describe and analyse the collection of wedding rings, gold and money – a phenomenon that culminated in Italy with the ceremonies of the 'Day of Faith' which, according to many historians, marked the highest level of public support of the whole 'Ventennio' – among the communities in order to support the Italian war effort.

Remigio Petrocelli graduated with honours in Historical Sciences at the Federico II University in Naples. Subsequently, he moved to Australia and then to Scotland where in October 2018 started a PhD at the University of Dundee. His project, which mainly draws on primary sources of Rome and London archives, is about the Italian fascist clubs in Scotland during the interwar period (1922-1940).

BLASCO SCIARRINO, *CENTRAL EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY, VIENNA/
BUDAPEST*. ‘ALLEGIANCE IN EXCHANGE FOR BENEFITS: THE
CONVERGENCE BETWEEN NATIONALIST GREAT WAR VETERANS
AND FASCISM IN ITALY, 1919-1925’.

During the Great War, many nationalist Italian soldiers developed a strong sense of entitlement based on their military service. After the war, numerous among these ex-servicemen attempted to exact material and symbolic rewards from the Italian state, motivated by these expectations. However, between 1919 and 1922, the liberal governments and non-Fascist mass parties often failed to acknowledge these ex-combatants’ claims. Consequently, various veterans, estranged from these political actors, joined or sympathized with the budding Fascist movement, which promised to grant them the benefits they sought and, at times, helped them achieve their goals at the local level. After 1922, the political convergence between Fascism and many ex-fighters was further cemented by Mussolini’s regime, which bestowed several privileges on the veterans who accepted its rule. By affording these rewards, the Fascist dictatorship managed to secure the long-term loyalty of a large number of ex-combatants, a success which helped it entrench its rule over Italy. Studying the ways in which Fascism campaigned among nationalist veterans by catering to the latter’s sense of entitlement provides an innovative perspective on the strong connection which this political force managed to establish with many former fighters. Furthermore, this analysis contributes to comprehensively assessing the factors which caused the political radicalization of numerous veterans. To analyse these issues, my contribution focuses on the associations which represented the interests of the nationalist ex-servicemen, outlining these organizations’ goals and strategies, in addition to their interactions with prominent political actors.

Blasco Sciarrino is a PhD candidate in the Comparative History Program of the Central European University in Budapest/Vienna (CEU). His research topic concerns the political activism of Italian and Romanian Great War veterans, between 1918 and 1944, in a comparative and connective perspective. His research interests include veteran politics, fascism, nation-building cultural policies, politics of memory, cultural transfers, public diplomacy and paramilitary organizations.

ALBERTO MURRU, *NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY*. 'LE POLIZIE DELL'ASSE'. POLICE COLLABORATION BETWEEN FASCIST ITALY AND NAZI GERMANY'.

The role of the political police reveals much about how fascist dictatorships functioned. While much has been written about the police in Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany, however, little comparative or relational work exists. In 1936, the Gestapo and the Italian police signed a secret agreement that promoted a cross-border persecution of anti-fascist movements and activists. Anti-fascism was a transnational movement not confined to national borders because of the growing number of people forced to expatriate and to continuously migrate and due to the worldwide support that the anti-fascist cause received. The repressive apparatuses of fascist and authoritarian states acted accordingly. Their reach stretched outside their own jurisdictions through the deployment of agents, spies, and informers abroad, but also through the establishment of contacts and exchanges of information with other police forces. Anti-communism was the common element used to approach foreign police forces and to initiate collaborations. From 1936 till the armistice of 1943, the Gestapo and the Italian police thus cooperated to control and neutralise political dissidents living abroad and to impede their mobility. They also established partnerships and collaborations with other police forces. The reconstruction of their bilateral cooperation and of their broader networks of interactions permits to compare the organizations, workings, and objectives of the Gestapo and of the Italian police and to identify similarities and differences between them. Furthermore, this research examines the collaboration between the two police forces in light of the development of the broader relationships between Fascist Italy and the Third Reich.

Alberto Murru started his PhD at Newcastle University in 2017. Previously, he studied History in Bologna, Italy. His MA dissertation reconstructed the life of an Italian anti-propaganda organisation called 'Anti-communist Study Centre', which was created by the Fascist regime in the second half of the 1930s.

FABIO SIMONETTI, *UNIVERSITY OF READING / IWM*. ‘SICILIANS BETWEEN INVASION AND LIBERATION: AN ORAL HISTORY INVESTIGATION OVER MEMORY DISSONANCES OF THE ALLIED LANDINGS IN SICILY, 10 JULY 1943’.

This presentation will focus on the role oral history interviews and autobiographical writings can play in uncovering dissonances from established public narrations of events such as the Second World War Allied landings in Sicily. Operation Husky took place on 10 July 1943 and it was the successful Anglo-American attempt to move the war back to Axis held Europe for the first time since the 1940 evacuation of Dunkirk. The most iconic representation of the first encounter between Allied soldiers and Italian civilians is that of the liberation: while soldiers are always depicted in the act of giving chocolate and cigarettes away, overjoyed civilians fill the streets to welcome them. However, the researcher willing to pay attention to individual accounts of many civilians who experienced the British landings in South-East Sicily, might be surprised to find stories of violence, diffidence and fear caused by what many people recalled as an enemy invasion. Oral History sources, treated as a ‘subjective, spoken testimony’ (Thompson 1978), not only tell us about a historical event, but also about its meaning for who experienced it directly. Not only interviews open a window over what happened in the past, but they also tell us how the past affected people’s lives. By using oral history interviews I recorded and autobiographical writings this presentation intends to examine existing, buried dissonances in individual’s memories that, rather than build an anti-Allied version of the events, prove the existence of a variety of different, parallel – often conflicting – representations of the memory of the Allied invasion of Sicily.

Fabio Simonetti is a Ph.D. student at the University of Reading (UK) and the Imperial War Museums as part of an AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Partnership (CDP). He is currently researching the encounter between British soldiers and Italian civilians during the Second World War. He owns a MA in History from ‘Sapienza’ – Università di Roma, where he studied the social history of the Second World War and specialised in the use of Oral History sources. He is the author of a monography concerning the Nazi occupation of Rome entitled Via Tasso. Quartier generale e carcere tedesco durante l’occupazione di Roma (Odradek, 2016).

CARLO MOLL, LONDON. 'BETWEEN LA BELLA MORTE AND THE MASS GRAVE- THE (AN)-AESTHETICS OF DEATH IN ITALIAN LITERATURE OF THE GREAT WAR'.

The representation of violent death on the battlefield in the arts, popular culture and literature after the Great War has long been firmly established as the object of inter-disciplinary, transnational academic research and as such figures prominently in the work of such eminent scholars as George Mosse, the late Paul Fussell and Jay Winter. While the commemoration of fallen soldiers generally took similar forms in stone and paper in every nation or Empire fielding armies in the war, the death of servicemen was nonetheless also always integrated into national, regional, local and class-specific cultures of mourning, glorifying and remembering that differed from one place to another. In front of this general, theoretical backdrop, using Italian veterans' literature of the Great War, so-called *letteratura di guerra*, this paper shall analyze how the death of Italian soldiers in the trenches of the Great War was processed in a typically Italian fashion through notions of a 'beautiful death' (*bella morte*) in battle that had been established and popularized in Italy's high culture since the Renaissance and which incorporated both traditionally Catholic elements and aristocratic-bourgeois class bias. In Italy's literature of the Great War, images of death in battle thus became increasingly standardized, making a clear distinction between officers, who died an aesthetically appealing, upright death and common peasant soldiers, whose lives ended mostly anonymously in slaughter and mass graves. It will conclusively be shown how Italian veteran-authors created images of death that were both traditionally Italian and closely compatible with Fascist practices of commemoration, allowing the Italian public to remember the fallen of the Great War in a way that was both and customary and contemporary and which affirmed the established social, political and cultural privileges of the nation's ruling classes.

*Carlo Moll is a post-doctoral researcher living and working in London. This year, he received his PhD in History from the University of Cambridge with a thesis on counter-cultural radicalization and the construction of hegemony in Italian nationalism and fascism, 1884–1935. Prior to starting doctoral studies, he studied a MPhil in Modern European History at the University of Cambridge (St. Catharine's College) and a BA in History and Political Science at the University of Munich. His research focuses on the Italian literature of the Great War (so-called *letteratura di guerra*) published between 1915 and 1940 and the role of veterans as public intellectuals and keepers of public memory during the Fascist ventennio. In his PhD dissertation (provisional title: *Anatomy of a Forgotten Genre: A History of Italian war literature, 1918-1940*) Carlo examines war novels, memoirs, diaries,*

theatre plays written by veterans of the First World War, both from a standpoint of cultural production, as well as from a Gramscian perspective as regime-sustaining narratives of Fascist origin.

SILVIA PIZZIRANI, *UNIVERSITY OF BOLOGNA*. ‘CITIZEN-CONSUMERS AND ENTERPRISES FACING THE CRISIS OF THE SEVENTIES’.

The aim of my research is to analyse how the oil crisis and Italian austerity policies reshaped the outline of the citizen-consumer during the Seventies, a decade of changes in terms of how consuming was conceived, and a shift in the way consumerism was organized. In Italy, austerity was perceived on one hand as a moral revolution against the excess of capitalism: Berlinguer’s famous speech in 1977, about how austerity could be a tool in the fight against the capitalistic and consumerist system in crisis, is an important example. On the other hand, austerity was considered as a device for society control. Not only the “Movement of the ‘77”, but also a feminist magazine such as Effe and a fashion and entertainment magazine such as Grazia, expressed criticism regarding austerity policies, seen as limiting women’s emancipation, young people’s freedom and the achievement of fundamental social and political rights. Furthermore, major companies such as Eni and Fiat had to rethink their way to talk to consumers while facing the social and political challenges caused by the economic and political crisis and by the newly born consumer society. Focusing on the 1970s would allow to tackle major questions about changes in the global economy and the transformation of the capitalist marketplace from that decade onwards. Through my research, I am trying to reconsider the struggle between austerity and consumption in modern Italy, thus shedding light on what consumption has meant and means. Looking at energy prices and consumption in general is a way into thinking about how consumers viewed the global economy and their own role – as well as rights and responsibilities – within it.

Silvia Pizzirani is currently a PhD student at the University of Bologna, Department of History. She studied History at the University of Bologna, where she graduated cum laude in 2017 with a final dissertation entitled: Female Associations and Energy Consumption in England, between the Twenties and the Fifties. Currently her research focuses on consumption during the energy crisis in the Seventies and she is studying how different consumer cultures and key enterprises (namely Eni and Fiat) reacted to the crisis and austerity policies.

FRANCESCO MACCELLI, *UNIVERSITY OF FLORENCE AND SIENA* .
'STUDYING LABOUR SKILLS USING HISCO-BASED MEASURES:
ITALY, 1871-2011'.

Modern technologies are considered to transform the nature of production and jobs (e.g. Frey, 2019) and to deeply change the main features of modern industry (e.g. Acemoglu and Restrepo, 2019). Indeed, the relationship between technology and labour is a “cyclical debate” that re-emerges in periods of rapid technical change. Nowadays the main topics are: How is technology redefining the set of tasks and skills performed by workers? Are the new technologies enskilling, deskilling or polarizing labour distribution of skills? Have all technologies the same impact on work skills or their specific and idiosyncratic features matter? Changes in occupations are key to analysing changes in economy and society. To study such changes over time, we need both historical occupational data and procedures to make comparative measurements. I consider these questions in the Italian case (1871- 2011) adopting the Historical International Standard Classification of Occupations (HISCO), that allows to map occupational titles presented in Italian population censuses. It goes on to investigate the effects of technological change on the division of labour, the sectorial development of the economy, and the class structure and skill levels of labour. Contrary to conventional wisdom, I observe a general deskilling effect of different waves of technological change, i.e. the introduction of new technologies generally substitutes more skilled (medium) workers with lower skilled ones; moreover, the different potential of technologies matters, showing a milder effects in the phases of industrial take-off and in the ICT age and a more strong one in the Golden age.

Francesco Maccelli is a PhD candidate in Historical Studies at the University of Florence and Siena. He obtained a BA and an MA in Historical Sciences (Economic History) at the University of Florence. He is currently researching the relationship between technology and labour, with a specific focus on the Italian case (1861-2011). Francesco is also interested in the role played by the demographic trend in history, referring to the 19th and 20th centuries, and in the history of Statistics. He pays particular attention to historical datasets and quantitative methods. From 2019, Francesco is the junior editor of Passato e Presente journal.

NATASHA BISHOP, *SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY, NEW YORK*. ‘SCRITTA SULLA SABBIA: AN ENCYCLOPEDIAIC READING OF DADAMAINO'S MUTE H’.

Dadamaino’s 1976 performative protest, *L’H muta scritta sulla sabbia* (Tall el Zaatar), marks a pivotal point in the career of an understudied artist. This paper analyzes the protest, in which Dadamaino inscribed a grid of Hs into a beach on Lake Como, and its 1977 restaging for photographic documentation. *L’H muta* is examined within the framework of an “encyclopediaic” semiotic model proposed by Umberto Eco, which allows for signs to be interpreted through specific cultural contexts. Three critical aspects of *L’H muta* are treated: the gesture, the grid, and its political status. These features of the work are contextualized within longstanding debates about artistic gesture versus artistic object under the Marshall Plan, aesthetic discourse within the Italian Communist Party, and the turbulent *Anni di Piombo* (1969-1988). *L’H muta* is further situated within Dadamaino’s involvement in two influential Milanese art movements, Spatialism and Azimut, to underscore her current absence from art historical scholarship on the postwar era. This paper maps the arc of Dadamaino’s career to show how *L’H muta* marks her turn away from creating works reliant on collective authorship between artist and viewer, toward a series of introspective non-communicative objects. It analyzes the photographic documentation of the restaged performance of *L’H muta* as a product of the artist’s subsequent work. This focus on restaging and documentation demonstrates that *L’H muta*, both as protest and as document, calls into question the artist’s stated position on the permanence of immaterial gestures and her statements on the strict separation of art and politics.

Natasha Bishop earned a master’s degree in Art History from Syracuse University in Spring 2020. Her research focuses on how political ideologies informed artistic practices in postwar Italy, with special interests in performative protests and the work of female artist, Dadamaino. Bishop received the Graduate Research Grant from the College of Arts & Sciences at Syracuse University to support her thesis research at the Archivio Dadamaino in Somma Lombardo. Prior to beginning her graduate studies, Bishop interned at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice. She is currently expanding her thesis into the first English-language book project on Dadamaino.

VICTORIA SKELTON, *AUBURN UNIVERSITY*. ‘PROJECTING A MODERN NATION: THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN OF ITALY AND THE POLITICS OF DIVORCING ‘ITALIAN STYLE’.

My paper, “Projecting a Modern Nation: The National Council of Women of Italy and the Politics of Divorcing ‘Italian-Style’” explores the International Council of Women’s (ICW) 1961-1963 film contest from the perspective of the National Council of Women of Italy (CNDI). It compares and contrasts the international cinema darling *Divorce, Italian-Style* with the CNDI’s selection, *The Sound of Trumpets*. While *Divorce, Italian-Style* might have found more familiarity with audience, the CNDI’s selection rejected an embarrassing national representation of violence against women and supposed backwardness in an international sphere, favoring a depiction of Italy in the height of its “Economic Miracle” instead. I use the film competition to frame the CNDI’s long history of nationalist presentation in the international arena of the ICW, highlighting the relationship between international collaboration and national pride. The CNDI, an early member of the ICW, has often been criticized for its practice of “historic” feminism, but this paper demonstrates that its feminism has always been bound to international perception and performance of nationality. Detailing the CNDI’s historical relationship to the multipurpose feminist ICW, the paper frames Italian feminists’ work as more complicated than the binary of Cold War Italian women’s organizing, and international in its scope. This paper contributes to Italian studies of women and gender, as well as complicating Cold War Italian feminist histories beyond the conservative *Centro Italiano Femminile* (CIF) and the socialist *Unione Donne Italiane* (UDI).

Victoria Skelton is a Ph.D. Candidate in Auburn University’s Department of History. Her dissertation, “‘Women in a Changing World’: The International Council of Women, Global Power, and the Boundaries of Sisterhood, 1888-1966,” examines the intersections of feminism, nation-building, and empire in the first multipurpose international women’s organization. She explores the organization’s pluralistic feminism and early consolidation to better illuminate women’s construction of national and gendered identities through the international imagining and discourse of a global sisterhood. The project has been generously funded by the Sophia Smith Libraries, the Auburn University Graduate School, and the Auburn University Department of History.

ABSTRACTS OF RESEARCH POSTERS AND VIDEO ESSAYS

MARIA ELENA ALAMPI, *UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM*. 'FRAMING
PRECARITY ON THE BIG SCREEN THROUGH GENDER
REPRESENTATIONS IN ITALIAN CINEMA'.

In 2007-2008 the world faced a significant financial crisis creating the phenomenon that would become known as precarity; this refers to the widespread condition of temporary, flexible, contingent, random, intermittent work in post-industrial societies. This term has also been used to highlight precarious life experiences characterized by a lack of predictability and financial security due to the lack of a stable job, with implications for material or psychological well-being. As a result, critical literature has highlighted how contemporary cinema has begun to represent precarity in incisive ways and suggests that it should be considered as a new political and social commitment. Given the great number of Italian films that have been produced the topic of precarity, this paper focuses on contemporary Italian popular films as case studies to examine how overriding heteronormativity structures, based on outdated hegemonic patriarchal ideology, influence the film representation of femininity and masculinity in the current Italian precarity era. This gives an overview of the contemporary Italian cultural context and discusses the ways in which these films occupy a place within world cinema in terms of political and social discourses.

I completed my BA in Modern Languages at the University of Messina (Italy) in 2008 with a thesis on the postmodern cinema of Woody Allen. Subsequently, I obtained my MA in Modern Languages: Literatures and Translations cum laude at the University of Messina (Italy) in 2012. My thesis focused on Malcolm X and his cinematographic representation by Spike Lee. I am currently involved in Italian film studies as a PhD student at the University of Birmingham. My research focuses on contemporary Italian films dealing with precarity and gender.

LAUREN JONES, *UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM*. 'PRECARITY AND EMPATHY IN ITALIAN MIGRATION CINEMA: COVER BOY: L'ULTIMA RIVOLUZIONE AND FIORE GEMELLO'.

Discourses on identity in modern Italy are challenging and multifaceted and ideas around national identity have often been questioned in periods of economic, political and social change. In the last few decades increased immigration to Italy has once again brought national identity into question and has increasingly become a topic of public discourse. Italian cinema has often engaged with social and political issues and my research will explore how contemporary cinema has responded to political discourses on immigration. In particular, it will analyse how cinematic mechanisms of emotional engagement contribute to, reinforce, or challenge discourses surrounding national and migrant identities.

Italian cinema has portrayed themes of immigration through a variety of cinematic techniques from realism to comedy, however common themes pervade many of the texts. This video-essay will highlight how migrant and Italian characters often represent precarious and marginalized identities and are connected by a common otherness which challenges national cohesiveness (Ciavola 2010:292). This forms part of my larger research project which explores how spectators' emotional engagement with a film is related to such socio-political narratives.

Lauren Jones obtained a BA in Ancient History and Italian Studies at the University of Birmingham in 2011. Following this, she completed a MA in Italian Studies at Georgetown University in 2015. She is currently a PhD student at the University of Birmingham in the Department of Modern Languages and is funded by the Wolfson Foundation. Her research focuses on the representation of immigration in Italian cinema in relation to emotion, politics, and identity. By analysing cinematic mechanisms of emotional engagement in relation to socio-political narratives her research aims to contribute to discussions on cinematic ethics and impegno.

THOMAS LOCKWOOD, *UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL*. 'A RE-EVALUATION OF ITALIAN CRITICAL RESPONSE TO THE *POLIZIESCO ALL'ITALIANA*'.

During the 1970s a new form of profitable Italian popular cinema, mainly inspired by American crime films such as *Dirty Harry*, were produced. Known as *poliziesco all'italiana*, these films focused on the exploits of violent police commissioners to cash in on the turbulent period of Italian history, *Anni di Piombo*, to appeal to a growing desire by audiences to consume violent content.

Despite growing academic interest in these films, critical reception has been largely neglected, leading to modern discourse describing critics as, almost universally, rejecting the films in response to allegedly containing fascist and right-wing reactionary content, with fears that the visual, narrative and ideological forms could lead to audiences undertaking violence on the streets in the name of fascism.

However, I will argue this is an unsuitable assessment. Although high profile critics, such as Morando Morandini and Leo Pestelli, rejected the films for fascist or reactionary content, there are examples of critics, such as Pietro Bianchi, Guglielmo Biraghi and Maurizio Porro, who did not reject them and even emphasised positive traits of these films. In fact, labelling the films fascist could be seen as an attempt to undermine developments taking place in Italian film criticism during this period, mainly the acceptance of popular cinema within critical discourse. This paper focuses on the response by Biraghi and Porro and aims to explore their critical response to *poliziesco all'italiana* in relation to the reasons as to why high profile critics labelled these films as fascist in narrative content.

Tom Lockwood has an MA in Documentary Filmmaking from Liverpool John Moores University and is currently undertaking a PhD in Film Studies at the University of Liverpool.

Tom's research explores popular Italian crime films produced during the 1970s, with a focus on how they were received by film critics and their impact on the development of Italian film criticism during this period. Some of his further research interests include British and American crime cinema and film practice, with regular involvement in the production of short films, as well as teaching practical filmmaking and editing in schools.

SIMONA SCANNI, *UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM*. ‘EFFECTIVENESS OF ONLINE LANGUAGE LEARNING: A CASE STUDY OF ITALIAN AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE’.

This study intends to investigate the effectiveness of learning Italian online, particularly by analyzing individual factors which contribute to the success of online language learning.

This study is grounded on the premise that online learning, particularly in the foreign language arena, makes education more accessible for learners around the world. In fact, an increasing number of universities and institutions are turning to blended and distance learning to increase participation, (and recently correlated to the sudden COVID-19 emergency). Moreover, the study fills a research gap in the online learning of Italian as a Foreign Language. The literature review examines some crucial factors in online L2/FL learning. Considering an online environment, where learners are essentially alone and independent in their learning, the process of acquiring a foreign language is influenced by individual and internal variables, such as motivation, personality, identity and autonomy in learning. The study itself covers both a critical assessment of historical and current theoretical approaches on the subject as well as my own suggestions and possible theoretical developments. This study uses a mixed-method approach that combines qualitative and quantitative techniques, in order to understand the research problem more completely. Hence, the research includes open-ended questions that will help to better explain and interpret the data and their validity and reliability. Because of the use of the Internet as a means of interaction and communication, and the need to reach a national and varied sample, the questionnaire was administered through an online survey software.

My decision to conduct research in online language learning as a Distance Learning student was motivated by my previous experience. After the time I spent living abroad, I enrolled in a Master's degree in Modern Languages at the University of Bari and, while studying, I obtained the CEDILS certificate which allowed me to become a qualified Italian FL/SL teacher. Sensing a growing demand for online teaching, I embarked on a new specialism: teaching Italian, via Skype, to English speakers around the world, using English as a vehicular language. I had finally found my passion.

I subsequently passed my entry test to qualify as an English teacher in secondary school in Italy. The following year I passed an important competitive exam, the Italian “Concorso Docenti 2016” to become a stable teacher in schools. In 2019, I obtained Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) to teach in England.

