

# Language, space and otherness in Italy since 1861

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## ABSTRACTS OF PAPERS

### **John Agnew (UCLA) *Working the Margins: The Geopolitical Marking of Italian Identity***

Recently, the deepening imbroglione over immigration seems to have replaced both an older irredentism and a Mediterranean geopolitics as the predominant way in which Italian identity is being expressed relative to the others against whom that identity is being constructed. In fact, I would argue, the making of Italian national identity has always involved three moments of discursive stress that have simply waxed and waned in relative historical significance: a cartographic anxiety about adjacent nationalities, the emigrant/immigrant imaginary, and the Europe/Africa axis at both nationwide and North/South levels.

### **David Atkinson (Hull) *Conceptualising space and negotiating the language of geopolitics in Fascist Italy***

Geopolitical theorising flourished in several countries in the first half of the twentieth century in response to the flux and instabilities of the period. These approaches were explicit attempts to conceptualise and comprehend the dynamic spatialities of the political world. To this end they proclaimed a privileged comprehension of space alongside a broad vision that encompassed territoriality, politics and their shifting re-alignments all at once. This paper explores the conscious development of the Italian geopolitical movement of Trieste and its journal *Geopolitica* (1939-1942). The paper addresses this negotiation of an Italian version of geopolitical theorising from amidst wider European debates in the interwar period, and the representation of this Italian perspective through a sophisticated form of geopolitical cartography. It will focus particularly upon the movement's boundary-making impetus whereby it delineated the territories and resources that Italy might claim in the Mediterranean and Africa, and those to be conceded to rival powers. I will also outline how the Triestine geopoliticians sought to construct a broader-based geopolitical imagination by disseminating their theories throughout society from the realms of states craft and political discourse, via commercial circles, through education policies, to the circuits of everyday, popular media. Finally, I will discuss how these geopoliticians eventually found themselves policing the language of geopolitics as these ideas grew in popularity and purchase in Fascist Italy.

**Claudia Bertolè (Torino) *La rappresentazione dei disabili nel mondo del lavoro: confronto tra il linguaggio del cinema di finzione e quello del film di promozione e sostegno***

La relazione si propone di analizzare due diversi modi di utilizzo del linguaggio cinematografico nella rappresentazione del soggetto disabile nel momento dell'inserimento nel mondo del lavoro. In particolare verranno messi a confronto due modalità di rappresentazione: una tratta da una recente opera cinematografica di Giulio Manfredonia, *Si può fare* (2008), l'altra da un cortometraggio a metà tra opera di finzione e documentario *Storia di Angelo—una storia possibile* (2000) realizzata a cura della Provincia di Torino nell'ambito del progetto 'Mediafor—un ponte per l'impresa' sull'inserimento dei disabili nel mondo del lavoro. L'obiettivo della presente ricerca è quello di dimostrare che la rappresentazione nell'opera di finzione del soggetto disabile, in questo caso a contatto con la particolare realtà del mondo del lavoro, ne evidenzia le 'diversità' per lo più in termini positivi/caricaturali, sulla base di un impianto a tratti comico; laddove il cortometraggio di promozione del progetto di inserimento di giovani portatori di handicap in realtà produttive sottolinea in maniera più diretta e mirata le peculiarità dei soggetti, al fine di dimostrarne la concreta possibilità di efficace inserimento nel ciclo produttivo. L'analisi partirà dai modi di rappresentazione del più recente *Si può fare*, nel quale un sindacalista (interpretato da Claudio Bisio) diventa direttore di un'associazione e si trova a coinvolgere un gruppo di disabili mentali in un lavoro di squadra, per arrivare a quelli della seconda opera, *Storia di Angelo—una storia possibile*, realizzata inserendo come diretto protagonista delle riprese un giovane disabile che all'epoca lavorava in un panificio in provincia di Torino.

**Claudia Brazzale (Rutgers) and Cristiano Lanzano (Torino) *Performing the Other: the choreography of the African body***

In recent years, West African dance and drumming have become increasingly popular in Italy. The spread of African dance in the West has occurred in great part thanks to the touring of African national dance troupes and the teaching activities of young African artists. The recent wave of West African immigration and especially of Senegalese male immigrants has significantly contributed to the popularity and dissemination of 'African dance' in Italy. 'African dance and drums' have undoubtedly provided young West African immigrants in Italy with an important form of self-identification (and in some successful cases, a ticket into the country and a form of subsistence). However, the performance of African dance and drums and its related economy rest very often on problematic representations, which exotify and objectify African dance and the African male body. African artists actively contribute to this representation through their performances and self-interpretations in front of Italian audiences. Looking at the microcosm of West African dance and drumming courses in Italy, this presentation will examine the kinds of inequalities and geographies of power at play in these classes and workshops. It will address some of the following fundamental questions: How is the African body presented in these dance classes? Does this representation provide means to express difference and to articulate dichotomies such as tradition/modernity, blackness/whiteness, Africa/Europe(Italy), male/female? What kind of relationships are drawn between the black male teachers and drummers and the white female dancers? Is there a fundamental male-female attraction that holds and structures the economy of African dance and drums? Finally, the presentation will consider the kind of geographies that the spread of African dance and drums maps out in Italy. The circulation of West African dance and drums often touches small towns in highly localist areas of Italy. In this way, the geography of African dance and drums in Italy appears to exceed the traditional cartography of major global cities drawn by African national dance troupes. How do these small

towns become theatres where the local/global disjunctures are at play? And, in a wider context of global migration and urban segregation, do West African dance and drumming courses offer a way, at the micro level, to subvert this geography of separation?

**Charles Burdett (Bristol) *Race, identity and otherness in Italian representations of the colonial world (1922-1939)***

The paper considers the extensive body of literary, journalistic and photographic material that was produced on other cultures and peoples during the interwar years; it looks at foreign correspondence, travel writing, and magazine culture as well as works of fiction by both established and by occasional writers. It begins by examining the ideas concerning Italian national identity that found expression in the work of those figures who assumed the role of presenting the progress of Italian expansionism in the interwar years and who, in many instances, also set themselves the task of describing the colonies of other European powers. It explores the derivation of the ideas on national identity that were expounded through a variety of differing media, their dependence on religious patterns of thought, their deployment of notions of history and time, and their frequent conflation of the concepts of race and culture. The paper seeks to show how various strands of thinking or discourses of national belonging that were evident within the series of representations drew upon, participated in and contributed to the vision of the world and Italy's place within it that Italian Fascism sought to propagate. The paper will then explore how the range of inter-connected definitions of national identity posited the cultures of those countries that were subject to Italian rule. It will look in detail at those arguments that were made for an inclusive model of identity that envisaged the involvement of Italy's subject populations. But at the same time, the paper will show how the indigenous cultures of Italy's colonies were represented as other and inferior, and how both racial segregation and the violent suppression of resistance were legitimated. The paper will conclude by looking at instances within textual or photographic depictions of the colonial world where the full complexity of the 'contact zone' (Mary Louise Pratt) was, either consciously or unconsciously, represented and where some kind of subversion of established categories of self and other occurred.

**Jennifer Burns (Warwick) *Lupus in fabula: the textual politics of fear and otherness in immigrant writing in Italian***

This paper will explore the rhetorical and affective mechanisms whereby fear is deployed as a constitutive element of the construction of immigrants as 'others' in contemporary (post-1990) Italian culture and literature. Drawing on the work of Brian Massumi (1993) and others on 'everyday fear' as an element of the politics of everyday life, I shall focus on fear not as a psychological condition or reaction in response to a specific empirical stimulus, but rather on fear as an 'everyday' presence in human interaction in contemporary society, which might be regulated and stimulated as a means of social control. In order to illuminate some of the specific mechanisms by which fear contributes to marking immigrants as radically 'other' in contemporary Italy, I shall examine two main areas. Firstly, and briefly, I shall outline the broader cultural mechanisms by which a migrant presence – largely collective, in this context – is identified as a threat, taking into account media representations of migrants and the specific discourses regarding migration promulgated by prominent voices such as Magdi Allam. I shall then use the figure of the migrant intellectual or cultural operator as a route to move towards the second, more substantial and perhaps original area of my discussion, which is the presence and function of fear in the interactions between migrants and 'native' Italians as represented or posited in literary texts by immigrant writers. The literary text offers a privileged mode of

examining the operation of fear in encounters between migrants and Italians, by means of its attention to rhetorical tropes and strategies, and also of its capacity not only to articulate but also to enact affective responses, enabling the (Italian) reader both to experience and to identify critically his/her own mechanisms of marking and responding to otherness. I shall pay particular attention in my analysis to figurations of physical space and movement, in order to elucidate the ways in which fear moderates boundaries between migrants and Italians in the everyday experience of (particularly urban) space. By examining these issues in a selection of texts by immigrant writers – dating from both the early period of this ‘new’ literature in Italian (1990-1995) and the later, more thematically pluralist period - I shall aim to demonstrate the complexity of the interaction of discourse and counter-discourse in this area. This indicates in turn the pervasiveness of the mechanisms of regulating fear, which perversely enact almost an erasure of otherness by dint of their very insistence in human social interaction: in other words, affective, social, and ethical responses are in effect crippled by fear on both ‘sides’ (for both the immigrant and the ‘native’ Italian). I shall conclude by (re-)placing these insights within their cultural and political context, questioning to what extent the deployment of fear in the construction of immigrants (and Italians) as ‘others’ in Italian culture is best understood within the specific context of Italian post-war history and/or as part of a global condition of anxiety in inter-cultural relations.

**Enrica Capussotti (Newcastle) *Il basilico e la vasca da bagno. Racism in Turin, 1950-1960***

The paper focuses on the representation of Southern Italian migrants in the main newspapers of Turin during the 1950s. From the early 1950s, even before the so-called economic boom, a constant flow of people moved from the South to the cities and rural areas of the North West. The paper analyses the discourses and the images developed in the newspapers in Turin to deal with the profound social and cultural transformations provoked by South-North internal migrations. The presentation critically engages with the representations, written and visual, of Southern migrants, trying to emphasize continuities and ruptures in the construction of the ‘internal other’. It also discusses the anti-southern prejudices, suggesting that they represented, in the period 1955-1961 at least, the expression of a specific form of racism spanning media, institutions, legislation, economic and social conditions. I will argue that in 1950s and 1960s the reception of southerner labour migrants in Turin is embedded in a racial discourse, albeit one lacking the strongly biological connotations of nineteenth-century positivists.

**Luciano Cheles (Poitiers) *The battle for and against PACS/DICO***

The paper will deal with the attempt made in 2007 by the short-lived centre-left government led by Romano Prodi to introduce a bill on civil partnerships which would also have legitimated same-sex relationships. It will examine the rhetorical strategies and expressive forms used by the supporters of the bill and by its detractors (both within and outside the centre-left coalition). Special attention will be paid to the interventions of the Church, and to the attitude of Alleanza Nazionale (which gave much prominence to, and supported, the arguments used by the Catholic hierarchies to attack the Bill, despite claiming to be a secular party). Political mobilisation in favour of and against PACS/DICO took different forms. The paper will focus on the role of such public events as ‘Family Day’ and the Gay Pride march, and on the posters produced by a number of parties and movements (Forza Nuova, Alleanza Nazionale, Forza Italia, the Lega and the Democratici di Sinistra) on the question of same-sex relationships. The paper will also consider the changing attitudes towards same-sex relationships manifested by some ex-Alleanza Nazionale leaders (notably Gianfranco Fini and Gianni Alemanno).

**Clarissa Clò (San Diego State University) Out in Italy, out of Italy: the preclusion of sexual citizenship in *Improvvisamente l'inverno scorso***

This paper explores the strategies adopted in Gustav Hofer and Luca Ragazzi's documentary film *Improvvisamente l'inverno scorso* (2008) in the attempt to capture an Italy that is simultaneously changing and utterly unwilling to change. Through the portrayal of the struggle of a same-sex couple – the directors themselves – suddenly confronting the possibility of seeing their union recognized by the Italian state at the time of the proposed DICO legislation in 2007, the film captures a tenuous and unstable time in contemporary Italian history amidst xenophobia, homophobia and solidarity. Against all odds, financial in the first place, the protagonists and directors of the film strive to re-appropriate public space, and adopt an inventive and innovative cinematic language to convey their message. In the film, Rome serves not as a mere background, but, at times, as the co-protagonist. While the city and its spaces play a crucial role, the microcosm of the capital represents a metaphor for the entire Italian nation. In addition to witnessing numberless sessions of parliamentary committee meetings behind closed doors, the directors interview many Italians from all over the country who came to Rome to demonstrate, protest, celebrate and generally to take part in public life, in manifestations as diverse as Family Day, Coraggio Laico and Gay Pride in piazzas like San Giovanni, Navona, Farnese, San Pietro. The capital is therefore also the symbol of where Italians congregate for special events to exercise their freedom of speech as citizens. Public places like piazzas, buildings, and monuments come to occupy a central role particularly in light of the new subjects and subjectivities portrayed, a powerful central theme that forces a rethinking of who inhabits, or is allowed to occupy, these spaces. The reclamation of visibility in public spaces is central to the two directors' intention. They speak from the position of Italian citizens not fully recognized either by the state or by their fellow citizens for being gay. In the documentary Hofer and Ragazzi position their bodies in public spaces as markers simultaneously of sameness and difference, disrupting the assumption and tyranny of heterosexuality in a profoundly heteronormative and homophobic system. Their film is personal and political at the same time. It is about the love between two people of the same sex that the state and many citizens do not want to recognize, but it is also about the country that they would like to see Italy become. While the interviews featured in the documentary recall Pasolini's *Comizi d'amore*, in their intention to uncover and challenge the sexual attitudes and prejudices of the population, other parts of the film transform it into a new cinematic entity with its own particular creative grammar.

**Grazia De Michele (Reading): From 'maladjusted' to 'victims': southern children in Turin primary schools between the 1960s and 1970s**

In the second half of the twentieth century, Italy experienced one of the greatest internal population movements in its history. Encouraged by the rapid industrialisation of the country, hundreds of thousands of people moved in search of better conditions of work and life. The migratory flow of southerners toward the cities of the north-west was particularly remarkable, both for its numerical dimensions and for the difficult and often dramatic encounter between northern and southern Italians. The belief that the South was backward and its inhabitants uncivilized – so widespread in Italy since the political unification – was still commonplace and inevitably influenced the attitude of northern host societies towards southern newcomers, perceived as internal 'others'. This paper will focus on the particular case of southern migrant children in Turin primary schools. Described as being more prone to school failure and labelled as 'maladjusted', southern children were often placed in special needs classes, at least until the

end of the 1960s. In the 1970s things started to change, and southern children became to be represented by protest movements, both within and outside schools, as 'victims' to be freed from the grip of a strongly class-biased education system. But they continued to be conceived of as objects rather than as subjects. Through the analysis of different sources – class registers, articles, songs, photographs, interviews – I will investigate how different discourses about these children were constructed by different subjects, questioning to which extent southern children and their families actually had the opportunity to make their voices heard.

**Paola Di Cori (Urbino) *Le donne italiane: uguali, diverse, altre? Eterotopie e tipologie femminili nell'esperienza storica del '900***

Attraverso alcuni esempi, principalmente derivati da ricerche sul lavoro e la militanza politica, e dal cinema, nel mio contributo vorrei sottolineare alcuni aspetti caratteristici della presenza storica delle donne italiane nello spazio pubblico nazionale. Riferimenti teorici principali per questa indagine sono la concezione di Foucault sulle eterotopie, quella di Michel de Certeau intorno alla dinamica tra spazi e luoghi, e in particolare le ricerche su corpi e spazio svolte da geografe e filosofe femministe provenienti principalmente dal mondo anglofono (Linda McDowell, Elizabeth Grosz, Doreen Massey, Gillian Rose, tra molte). Secondo questi apporti, quando riferiti alle donne, termini come 'alterità', 'differenze', 'marginalità', e altri ancora, fanno parte di un insieme di strategie assai complesse, all'interno delle quali occorre mettere in evidenza: (1) *il piano della visibilità*, vale a dire il fatto che nel caso delle donne l'identità sessuale è legata all'insieme di elementi relativi allo sguardo – un tema assai studiato negli anni scorsi: essere guardate dagli altri, guardare se stesse, guardare gli altri che le guardano; (2) *il rapporto tra spazio e corpo*, storicamente e culturalmente diverso per uomini e per donne; questo elemento ha avuto e ha tuttora effetti profondi nel modo in cui gli uni e le altre concepiscono la propria identità, il lavoro e la sfera pubblica: dove e come sono costituiti la costruzione della soggettività, lo spazio lavorativo, quello dell'agire politico; (3) *la dissoluzione e ricomposizione dei luoghi*: come risultato di una diversa consapevolezza del rapporto esistente tra luoghi, spazio, corpi, e differenze sessuali, la presenza delle donne nella sfera pubblica si caratterizza per un incessante pratica di ridefinizione di cosa si intende per luogo. In un gran numero di casi (appuntamenti della politica, mestieri e professioni, cinema, arti e scrittura, ecc.) – sia che intervengano come soggetti attivi nella sfera pubblica e civile, come lavoratrici e protagoniste del mondo cinematografico, televisivo o letterario – le donne modificano in molti modi diversi i termini che caratterizzano i luoghi; tendono incessantemente a spostarne definizioni e confini, a rovesciare significati e consuetudini. Così accade quando esse occupano per la prima volta determinate posizioni o le rivisitano criticamente; si esercitano in nuove modalità performative a livello della rappresentanza politica, della stereotipia mediatica e pubblicitaria, della vita quotidiana e lavorativa, dell'immaginario artistico. La tensione per modificare incessantemente i luoghi percorsi consente infatti di esprimere e di far emergere una molteplicità di differenze: nascono nuove configurazioni tipologiche e lo spazio pubblico non viene semplicemente attraversato, bensì praticato e reso potenzialmente aperto al cambiamento.

**Derek Duncan (Bristol) *'Fernando Farias – maschio e carnagione mora': the dissonance of identity and translation***

Queer histories and geographies of gendered bodies differentiated through local categorisations of race and configurations of sexual practice challenge universalist identity claims. The move to particularisation however risks producing equally reified versions of identity, albeit on a reduced scale. The question this paper seeks to ask is what happens to categories of sexuality, race, and gender when they travel from a place in which they appear intelligible, to one in which they cease to make sense? What pressure is put on hard-won identities when they are subject to a radical change of context that brings a revised sense of subjectivity and an attendant array of new social practices? This paper focuses on *Princesa*, the co-authored autobiography of a transsexual, Brazilian, mixed-race prostitute who ends up in an Italian jail convicted of murder, and also on Enrique Goldman's film of the same name. Rather than deal with the 'documentary' or sociological aspects of these texts, I will consider in some detail two terms in Brazilian Portuguese relating to Fernanda's identity, the sense of which is profoundly altered by the absence of directly equivalent terms in Italian. The resultant problems of translation force a shift in Fernanda's sense of self and in the transformative bodily practices she undergoes in order to become a woman. This paper's title is taken from Fernanda's identity card, and is, in a sense, the bureaucratic starting point of this exploration. The first term 'veado' (also 'viado') refers to a mode of homosexuality in which the 'passive' partner assumes a 'female' role, socially as well as sexually. Fernanda is also defined racially as 'caboclo', or mixed-race. However, in Brazil the term refers specifically to someone of part-Indian descent, with less social status than a 'mulatto'. Both sexual and racial configurations of Fernanda's identity are changed by the move to Italy. Fernanda's ability to work as a prostitute depends on her remaining biologically male; familiar categories of race no longer obtain. These hybrid texts raise questions about what it means to cross or stand astride categories of gender, sexuality, and race – as well as of language. I am not interested in whether such apparently conflicted positionalities are best read as modes of constraint or causes for celebration. My interest lies in the productive insights that they might generate as instances of cultural fracture. The alterations to Fernanda's sense of identity are not self-elected, but reflect the parameters of heteronormativity that are far from universal in their articulation.

### **Jane Dunnett (Swansea) *Creating a 'Coscienza Razziale': Constructions of Jewish Alterity in Popular Literature under Fascism***

In November 1938, thousands of Italian citizens were deprived of their civil rights by the Fascist regime on the grounds that they were Jewish. The government passed legislation that ensured they would be isolated from their compatriots, no longer allowed to attend state schools or universities, work in the public sector or own companies. Intermarriage was also forbidden, and the space Jews occupied in society became increasingly narrow. The measures were accompanied by a virulent press campaign and the launch of Telesio Interlandi's *La Difesa della Razza* (1938-43) which disseminated the regime's racial thinking and sought, through a mixture of pseudo-scientific textual and photographic 'evidence', to demonstrate the superiority of the 'Italic race' over both the Jewish and African 'races'. The *leggi razziali* provoked a deep laceration in Italy's social fabric, one that was without precedent in the country's post-Unification history. Hitherto, the small Jewish community had been well-integrated, playing an active role in the nation's political and economic life. Anti-Semitism, if not entirely absent from Italian society, had been a relatively marginal phenomenon during the nineteenth century, linked largely to traditional Catholic prejudice. With the rise of nationalism and then Fascism, negative stereotyping of Jews grew more common. In 1921, the defamatory *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* was translated into Italian by Giovanni Preziosi, a former priest. On the one hand, the old accusation of deicide levelled at the Jewish people was repeated (e.g. Giovanni Papini's 1921

*Storia di Cristo*); on the other hand, new constructions of alterity started to appear which portrayed Jews as extraneous to the national population, the fifth column of enemy states (by turns, Germany, Great Britain and the USA). They were depicted as dangerous elements who spread subversive, revolutionary ideologies (communism) but somehow also represented the interests of international finance (capitalism). The main aim of this paper is to investigate the participation of popular literature in the rising tide of anti-Semitic government propaganda. In particular a number of detective novelists (e.g. Carlo Brighenti and Romualdo Natoli) opportunistically began introducing negative Jewish characters into their work after 1938, often casting them as criminals. It is possible to discern here and in other areas of popular fiction a shift from the casual racial stereotyping that had always existed, to a deliberate appropriation of official dogma on issues of race from the late 1930s onwards. In looking at this question, I shall examine the rhetorical devices used to describe and define Jews as 'other', interrogating the manner in which Fascist anti-Semitism was grafted onto traditional Catholic anti-Semitism. As part of my analysis, I shall discuss the discursive strategies designed to identify Jewish Italians in contradistinction to so-called Aryan Italians; in so doing, I shall pay particular attention to the redeployment of the sanctioned 'race discourse' on contamination, deviance, impurity and inferiority in popular literature of the period. This study of constructions of racial difference will offer further insights into Fascism's anthropological project to create 'l'uomo nuovo' (Gentile, 2005).

### **Elisabeth Fay (Cornell) *Città sovrapposte: the space of language in Moshen Melliti's Pantanella***

Ahmad, the protagonist of Melliti's *Pantanella: canto lungo la strada*, is not a citizen of Rome. He says he is not a citizen of any country, a condition he shares with many of the other men and women who find themselves living in an abandoned pasta factory: they are *abitanti*, not *cittadini*, and the 'città' they occupy itself inhabits a nebulous and uneasy space within the city. Throughout Melliti's work, the migrant subjects he portrays attempt to negotiate the impossibility of life in a city that can offer them no space, and at its most generous presents them with a careful semantic segregation from the autochthonous population. Meanwhile, the author and his translator confront a separate challenge, articulated in Rachid Boudjedra's insistence, in her introduction, that *Pantanella* is a novel first and foremost: can this work, which, as the title states, is a song sung in transit, be situated within the literary tradition of the destination culture? If it cannot be, where, if anywhere, can it be heard? This paper explores the implications of space and the migrant as imagined by Melliti in what Sandro Mezzadra has termed the 'post-colonial condition,' in which politics of migration, no longer able to enclose different populations within different territories, turn to hierarchical and repressive structures in an attempt to regulate the diverse bodies which share (and throw into crisis) a single space. If, as Giorgio Agamben maintains, the condition of the migrant reveals that 'che per qualcosa come il puro uomo in sé non ci sia, nell'ordinamento politico dello Stato-nazione, alcuno spazio autonomo,' (*Mezzi senza fine*, 24) then the crisis of space and belonging extends far beyond the individual tragedies of exclusion described by Melliti, exposing the fragility, in the global age, of the modern concepts of nation-state, of nationality, and of national culture. At the very least, Melliti's stateless narrative calls into question the boundary lines set up around national literatures, and advances the possibility that language can construct a space autonomous to ailing modern configurations, whose politics of exclusion have created an environment which seems to be constantly shrinking, for *cittadini* as well as *abitanti*.

**Teresa Fiore (California State University Long Beach), 'Othering' in and outside the Detention Centers: from exclusion to expression in *Libera* and *Come un uomo sulla terra***

In this paper I investigate the rhetorical strategies used by the Italian government since 1998 to systematically exclude 'irregular' immigrants via the institution of detention centers on the Italian soil and the subsequent support of similar camps in Libya. In the first part, I illustrate the history of the centers in Italy by paying specific attention to the constantly shifting and multiplying terms used to label them (centro di accoglienza, centro di permanenza temporanea, centro di identificazione ed espulsione, etc.). This linguistic fuzziness, I argue, is simultaneously indicative of the lack of a clear and targeted approach to immigration on the part of the government and of a systematic attempt at obfuscating the actual meaning and function of the centers as places of 'legal exception.' This dynamic and flexible approach to the rhetorics of exclusion has been successful in introducing and maintaining the practices of exclusion (confinement, and in some cases, deportation) made possible by the detention centers. It has also been remarkably effective in branding the immigrants as 'others' in the public perception by stressing their 'illegal' status as undocumented, while concealing, instead, the illegal nature of these very centers. Designed to deter undocumented immigrants, the centers actually suspend the right to mobility of people by re-conceptualizing the lack of documents as a crime, which pushes immigrants into an underground economy relying on illegal/forced labor. The pressure resulting from the debate around the detention centers contravening the Geneva Convention's stipulations and an emphasis on managing flows at the point of departure have effectively 'moved' Italian and EU borders down to Libya (Andrijasevic). In the second part of the paper, I explore the response of immigrants to such strategies of imprisonment and effacement. I take a close look at two recent texts co-produced by immigrants and Italians that shed light on the experience of detention in Libya: the memoir *Libera* by Abreha Tekle and Masto (2005) and the documentary *Come un uomo sulla terra* by Biadene, Segre, and Yimer (2008). They both follow the complex trajectories of escape for Africans trying to reach Europe amidst appalling difficulties, and provide a first-hand report on the detention practices run by the Libyan government or silently 'excused' by its acquiescent support, thanks to Italy's funding. The common thread in the memoir and the film is the desire to share tragic, and yet successful, stories of escape with the aim of denouncing the dangerous traffic and humiliating treatment of human beings, and to hopefully create public awareness to stop these government-assisted practices. *Libera* and *Come un uomo* are rhetorical acts with strong political objectives. Finally, by connecting these government-backed practices to the detention camps for Italians in the US during World War Two and those for Libyans in North Africa in the second and third decade of the twentieth century, I attempt to insert the role of the current detention camps in a longer history and larger geography of exclusion, made possible by the trans-national re-use of grammars of control and oppression.

**John Foot (UCL) *Ex-OP: memory and forgetting in ex-psychiatric hospital sites in Italy***

This paper will look to analyse questions of memory and forgetting with relation to five ex-psychiatric hospital sites in Italy. It is commonly assumed that all such hospitals were 'closed down' in Italy following the so-called 'Basaglia law' of 1978. In reality, each asylum had its own, local history of closure – both in terms of the time frame involved and in the way they were wound down as 'total institutions'. This paper will look at five such ex-asylums – Venice, Trieste, Rome, Imola and Arezzo. I will argue that these are complicated spaces today whose history and layout reflect multi-layered legacies and local histories linked to the relative strength of the Basaglia movement, contemporary health structures, local politics and history and speculation.

Differing strategies of memory and forgetting have been utilised in various sites. In some there are rich archives and modern museums which tell the story of the asylums and of their closure. Some are simply abandoned buildings. Others have become something else – housing, universities, even luxury hotels. In conclusion I will argue that this kind of micro-approach provides us with a much richer understanding of the Basaglia movement itself and its legacy in Italy.

### **Mia Fuller (UC Berkeley) *Italian Colonialism Still at Work: The Agro Pontino***

The Agro Pontino is well known to scholars as the site of Fascist Italy's most extensive land reclamation and settlement project, or *bonifica*. An ever-growing number of publications by foreigners and Italians alike, stemming from a wide range of political orientations, continue to study the 1930s origins of this 300-square-mile engineering and social project. And yet, very little scholarship addresses subsequent eras, up to the present, in the area's development. This paper recapitulates long-term ethnographic research focusing on the ways in which what is often called 'internal colonization' of the Agro in the interwar years can still be considered an on-going colonial project within Italy's own borders. In the paper, I question the usually presumed incomparability of 'internal' versus 'external Italian colonization, with specific reference to Libya. I also describe ways – such as the use of dialect – in which Agro citizens whose grandparents were Fascist settlers from the Veneto continue to set themselves apart from their Italian neighbors.

### **Ruth Glynn (Bristol) *Branding the terrorist Other: 'donne di piombo' in the print media***

This paper examines representations of women denoted as terrorist in the major organs of the Italian print media during the recent period of history known as the *anni di piombo* ('years of lead', c. 1969-83). Focusing on three case studies – the death of Margherita Cagol in 1975; the prison escape and police hunt for Maria Pia Vianale and Franca Salerno in 1977; and the kidnapping and murder of statesman, Aldo Moro, in 1978 – I explore how the dominant discourses of instability and abnormality employed by the press in their discussions of women terrorists in the 1970s seek to distance the female terrorist from the average, 'normal' and 'healthy' Italian woman. I further explore how a notable preference for foreign language labels such as 'passionaria' and 'guerrigliera' combines with physical descriptions which attribute to female terrorists non-Italia characteristics in order to construct both terrorism itself, and the women involved, as other. I discuss the case of Margherita Cagol as a paradigm for later representations of women terrorists, but contrast the more compassionate reading of Cagol's involvement in terrorism as the single known female militant in 1975 with the considerably less sympathetic discourses that emerge two or three years later. At this point, women's involvement in political violence is established as a far more widespread and threatening phenomenon, and evokes anxieties that relate not only to terrorism but also to the growing strength of feminism in Italian society. Drawing on Nira Yuval Davis's work on gender and nation, I argue that print media representations of 'terrorist women' both intensify and deflect from the particular threat posed by women terrorists in their subversion of women's traditional role as cultural border guard of the nation, and result in persistent attempts to brand such protagonists as other, beyond and removed from all 'national' cultural discourses.

### **Robert Gordon (Cambridge) From *Olocausto* to *Shoah*: otherness and the politics of naming genocide in late twentieth-century Italy**

Many of those close to the experience and memory of the Nazi genocide of Europe's Jews have long felt uneasy about the term 'Holocaust' that has become standard in international discourse, at least since the 1978 US TV miniseries of that name. Almost alone amongst 'Western' nations, however, public discourse in Italy since the 1990s has seen a marked lexical shift away from 'Olocausto' and towards the Hebrew term 'Shoah' as a name for the genocide, just as the event thus denoted moved to positions of ever greater prominence within international public and cultural arenas. This paper charts that shift and, through it, looks at some complex migrations in the 1990s within discourse on /by Jews in Italy, along axes between margin and centre, left and right, otherness or foreignness and the familiar or national. These discursive migrations intersect inevitably with questions of collective memory and national uses of history, but also with contemporary figurations of genocide (*pulizia etnica*) and border anxieties in geopolitical space and language.

### **Danielle Hipkins (Exeter) *Bruttissima? Italian comedy and the 'other' female***

It is now well established that cinematic narrative often depends upon an idealizing mechanism partially articulated through the physical appearance of its stars, an aspect more strictly policed in the case of female stars. Furthermore, recent scholarship (Gundle, 2007) has emphasized the key role female beauty has played in the evolution of Italian national cinema and identity. This paper, however, will examine the role of those women who have not met these ideals in the context of comedy, a genre that is highly dependent on their presence. The paper will explore how feminist film theory can engage with the demands of a generic formula which seeks out characters that deviate from the norm in a stereotypical fashion (King, 2002). From the romantic delusions of Franca Valeri's strong jawline (*Il segno di Venere*, 1955) to the castrating, overweight wives of contemporary popular comedy, this paper will analyse the function and performance of this 'other' woman in Italian comedy from the 1950s to the present day. It will ask whether the role has ever created space for subversion of the 'bellissima' paradigm.

### **Sarah Hill (Wellington, NZ) *Disabling images? The representation of people with intellectual disabilities in contemporary Italian culture***

Until the late 1970s, many intellectually disabled people in Italy were held under often appalling conditions in institutions where they were kept out of sight and out of mind of the general public. As Leslie A. Fiedler has suggested, 'perhaps such sequestration in institutions represents only an alternative way of making [them] invisible, as good as dead'—reflecting a secret (and at times, not-so-secret) belief that their death would in fact be the best thing for all concerned. Photography, however, documented this history of mistreatment, from late nineteenth-century pictures of 'insane' asylums to the photographs taken of the mentally ill and intellectually disabled in the 1970s that were partly responsible for the 1978 law that closed the institutions in which the two groups were confined together. These photographs constitute a profoundly distressing album of the mistreatment of the intellectually disabled. More recently, however, Italy has been acclaimed for the way it has sought to de-institutionalise residents of such 'homes' and find ways to enable people with intellectual disabilities to live satisfying lives within the community. For example, the integration of intellectually disabled children into public schools has taken place much more rapidly in Italy than in many other countries. But is this forward-thinking approach reflected in the ways in which the intellectually disabled are represented in

Italian culture today? How are they made visible or invisible, and to what extent are they offered the opportunity to play a role in their own representation? Do images of intellectual disability tend to perpetuate societal devaluing and 'othering,' or are there signs that people with intellectual disabilities and their families are succeeding in challenging negative or well-intentioned but patronizing stereotypes? This paper seeks to answer these questions through an analysis of the way images of the intellectually disabled are constructed in contemporary Italian photographic, filmic and print culture.

### **Nicola Labanca (Siena) *Il colonialismo italiano e il fascismo, 1928-1943***

Pochi Italiani oggi sanno che, per l'Impero coloniale del fascismo, nel 1937 furono emanate disposizioni regolamentari e poi legislative che avrebbero codificato un razzismo istituzionale nelle colonie africane. Questo avveniva un anno prima dell'introduzione della legislazione antisemita, oggi più nota. È comprensibile che gli Italiani di oggi ne sappiamo poco: sino a qualche decennio fa persino i pochi storici che si erano occupati di queste vicende, 'storici coloniali', avevano taciuto o ridimensionato questa realtà. Alcune ricerche in corso, invece, tendono per un verso ad anticipare i segnali di un'introduzione del razzismo coloniale a livello istituzionale e per un altro verso ad ampliare la sua dimensione. La relazione intende offrire alcuni esempi in ambedue i sensi, con particolare (ma non esclusivo) riferimento all'Africa orientale: episodi di razzismo istituzionale precedenti il 1937, documenti che comprovano l'estensione assai ampia dei progetti e delle norme del razzismo istituzionale in AOI. La maggiore dimensione cronologica e tematica dei campi di applicazione del razzismo coloniale istituzionale difficilmente può non portare a modificare il giudizio, tradizionalmente minimizzatore, sul colonialismo italiano. Si potrebbe anche affermare che si tratta di 'eccezioni' o di 'anomalie', avvenute 'ai margini' o 'sulla frontiera'. Il fatto è che esse sono perfettamente inseribili nell'ideologia fascista: non meno di quella serie coordinata di campi di concentramento istituiti dal fascismo in Cirenaica fra anni Venti e Trenta, ancora una volta 'ai margini' della (ri)conquista coloniale della Libia. Una vicenda, anche questa, di cui gli Italiani di oggi sanno ancora troppo poco.

### **Carl Levy (Goldsmiths London) *The 'othering' of Italy: postmodern approaches to the study of racism in Italy***

Since the 1980s, the appearance of post-modern and post-colonial approaches to the study of otherness in Italy have coincided with a wide variety of works in the history and social sciences covering 'orientalism' and the *Mezzogiorno*, colonialism and the colonial subject, the North-East and the Slavic 'other', anti-Semitism and the Shoah, and so-called *extracomunitari*, asylum seekers, refugees and Roma in contemporary Italy. This paper will examine to what extent postmodern approaches help or hinder research in this field. But the paper begins and ends with Antonio Gramsci, because the 'post-1989 Gramsci' arrived back in his country of origin through the matrix of 'otherness' literature, through the repackaging of Gramsci by Edward Said and the Indian school of Subaltern studies. The paper concludes with a short discussion of relatively recent work on Gramsci and anti-Semitism, which links with current politics and policy-making. Gramsci's exchange of views with his sister-in-law Tatiana Schucht during his incarceration in the early 1930s in the shadow of Hitler and in the context of his in-laws' Jewish heritage anticipated twentieth-first century Italian discussions on assimilationist strategies, multiculturalism, identity politics and cosmopolitanism.

**Cristina Lombardi-Diop (AUR and Northwestern) *Spotless Italy: race, hygiene, and the consumption of blackness***

In the wake of the historic election of the first black President of the United States, Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi shocked the world with an uncanny remark that referred to Barack Obama as 'young, beautiful, and with a tan.' The reference to Obama's racial identity, Berlusconi explained, was intended as a joke, but it is precisely the euphemistic humor employed by Italy's most prominent politician that reveals the unrelenting effect of the unspeakability of race – as a discourse and as a condition – in contemporary Italy. Following thinkers such as Salman Saayid and David Goldberg, this paper looks at contemporary Italy as a post-racial society under whose visual and discursive regime race appears without naming, unnamed, and thus invisible, a moment in which racial discrimination is deflected and the raciality of today's condition is thus washed away and made to disappear. The paper locates the 'purging' of race from the public arena in Italy's post-economic boom years and finds traces of its disappearance from public memory and discourse by following the story of an advertising company (Guaber) that has specialized in cosmetics and hygiene products targeted at Italian women since 1961. The talk will focus on the 2006-07 visual advertising campaign marketing the brand *Coloreria Italiana*. The paper argues that the advertising, by harking back to the visual colonial tradition of using black bodies to market 'black' products, signals the return of the racial colonial paradigm in the context of Berlusconi's Italy. Nonetheless, it also positions blackness at a crucial intersection between interracial sexuality, racial hetero-normativity, and the idea of hygiene. In this particular spot, by way of its washing, blackness becomes the absolute otherness to national selfhood. The analysis of race in national history will serve to deconstruct, make visible, and open for discussion the layered and submerged construction of racial otherness in contemporary Italy.

**Nicola Mai (London Metropolitan University) *From Albanophobia to (Roma)Romanophobia: moral panics and Italy's anxious (re)attachments to Berlusconi***

In the 1990s the arrival of Albanian migrants on the Italian shores coincided with the staging of a powerful moral panic, which produced equally powerful dynamics of social exclusion. In the 2000s, the Albanians were able gradually to extricate themselves from these exclusionary narratives and policies, which are now targeting new groups of newcomers: Romanian Roma migrants. The paper will draw on the original ethnographic material and observations gathered in the context of research undertaken in Italy to explore differences and similarities between the 'Albanophobia' of the 1990s and the '(Roma)Romanophobia' of contemporary times. These two interlinked moral panics will be examined in terms of their discursive constructions, of the relations they bear with deeper social transformations and of their psycho-social significance within Italy's enduring fascination with the political and libidinal economy brokered and embodied by Silvio Berlusconi. The paper will underline how both 'Albanophobia' and 'Romanophobia' can be seen as displacement mechanisms to avoid confronting the 'real issues' underpinning the fears of Italians: unemployment, inflation, the precarisation of survival, enduring and widespread political corruption and poor governance. In the process, instead of processing its own refuse, as was the case in Naples, Italy refuses once more to engage with reality, except in the form of a Berlusconi 'reality show'. Drawing on psycho-social theories of attachment and narcissism, the paper will contextualise Italy's enduring fascination with unreliable, authoritarian and seductive 'grandiose selves' within the processes of subjectification historically hegemonic within Italian culture and history. Thus, Berlusconi's 'reality show' can be seen as both fuelled by and reproducing Italians' narcissistic refusal to acknowledge the frustrating moral, economic and psycho-social conditions limiting the development of their subjectivities in

terms of autonomy, sustainability and dignity. In this perspective, the scandals which have recently exposed the libidinal and moral economy of Berlusconi's polity can be seen as a first crack in the narcissistic 'reality show' which has displaced Italians' attention away from the increasingly frustrating realities in which they live.

**Stephanie Malia Hom (Oklahoma) Staging Italy, staging other: organizing mass tourism in Italian colonial Libya**

The Ente Turistico ed Alberghiero della Libia (ETAL) was founded on 31 May 1935, and was intended as the organizational clearinghouse coordinating every sector of the Italian colonial tourism industry in Libya. As an agency of the fascist state, ETAL sought to control all aspects of the trade – acting as travel agent, tour operator, hotel manager, guidebook author, postcard and souvenir producer, as well as participant in colonial exhibitions. In practice, ETAL's organizing of mass tourism perpetuated the fundamental syncretism of the colonial tourists' experience, that is, maintaining two contradictory and simultaneous understandings of Libya: as both 'Italian' and 'Other.' This syncretism resulted directly from the rhetorical activation of multiple heritages (i.e., Rome, Orient, Africa, Fascism) in tourist propaganda, and as well, the physical incarnation of these heritages in the forms of hotels and exhibitions. For example, ETAL-run hotels represented physical manifestations of Italian colonial power, and thus the embodiment(s) of Italian nationalism, fascism, and by 1936, imperialism. They were cultural constructions par excellence. These hotels were attempts at national self-identification as well as efforts to incorporate the 'otherness' blatantly on hand in colonial everyday life. ETAL's obsession with hotel management might be interpreted as an attempt to discipline these competing national and colonial identities. The tension between Italianness and otherness in Libya was difficult to reconcile in tourist practices and propaganda, but at the same time, it had become the defining paradox of the Italian colonial tourism industry. My paper will first give a brief history of ETAL as an organization; second, it will examine the rhetorical constructions of Italianness and otherness in ETAL-produced propaganda aimed at Italian colonial tourists; and third, it will consider the spatial incarnations of this paradox in the form of ETAL-run hotels and exhibitions, such as the Hotel Uaddan and the Fiera di Tripoli, respectively. While ETAL effectively created the tourist system in Libya during the late 1930s and early 40s, bolstering hotel construction and management, inaugurating a cross-country transportation network, and publishing tourist propaganda about Libya, its incessant micromanaging of the tourism industry belied an organizational insecurity. It was an anxiety rooted in Italy's tenuous position as colonizer, and more so, in the irreconcilable split between national identity, or Italianness, and the 'exoticism' of the colonial context.

**Federica Mazzara (UCL) Redefining Italian spaces: Piazza Vittorio and transcultural aesthetics**

In 2002 Italian musician Mario Tronco and film director Agostino Ferrente decided to create an orchestra in the multicultural Quartiere Esquilino of Rome. The project came out of their desire to bring together the multiethnic musicians living in that part of the city. The result was truly extraordinary: a large group, made up of almost twenty musicians from many different countries, formed the so-called 'Orchestra di Piazza Vittorio' directed by Mario Tronco. The Orchestra is now internationally known and is currently on tour all over the world. In 2006 Agostino Ferrente made a documentary telling the story of how the Orchestra came to be formed. The film received many awards and has been screened internationally. The same year, 2006, saw the publication of a novel by the 'Italophone' Algerian writer Amara Lakhous entitled *Scontro di civiltà*

*per un ascensore a Piazza Vittorio* ('Clash of civilizations for an elevator in Piazza Vittorio'), which is again a story about the multicultural reality of Piazza Vittorio – an example, in fact, of the transformation of Italian society and of the importance that Italian migrant literature is gradually gaining. Lakhous's book reflects ironically and provocatively on the stereotypes and commonplaces related to the idea of 'otherness' within an Italian context. Starting from these musical, cinematic and narrative examples, the paper aims at analysing how immigration in Italy is beginning to produce cultural performances that enter the larger context of popular culture, and to what extent these performances, as aesthetic and cultural contributions, have been able to redefine Italian spaces.

### **Kate Mitchell (Cambridge) *È bella e brava!* female performing artists in late nineteenth-century Italian literary culture**

The nomenclature 'prima donna' was frequently used as a synonym for 'prostitute' during the nineteenth century, and in Italy the terms 'virtuosa' and 'prostituta' were similarly interchangeable (Rutherford, 2006). In this paper, I examine a selection of fiction and non-fiction accounts of female performing artists by female and male writers and critics. I show that while those by male writers posit the female performing artist as 'other' by constructing her as a *femme fatale* and emphasizing her beauty and seduction, women writers' accounts debunk her mythical status as a Siren figure thereby proposing a new model of womanhood which went beyond the aesthetic. Women writers and critics achieved this by renouncing the use of language centering on the female performing artist's appearance characteristic of male accounts and championing instead her skills as a virtuoso performer. I argue that women writers and critics posit female performing artists as role models for female spectators, who perceived in female performing artists the promise of emancipation from the monotony of their everyday lives.

### **Florian Mussnug (UCL) *Primo Levi: words and spaces of survival***

The representation of traumatic experience, according to many cultural theorists, is best understood as an inherent paradox, an *aporia*. As Cathy Caruth has argued, trauma is seared directly into the psyche and therefore not subject to the distortion of subjective memory, yet traumatic memory also marks a crisis of representation and of narrative time. Since events can only be understood as traumatic *after* the fact, traumatic memory is never directly accessible: 'its truth is bound up with its crisis of truth' (C. Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience*, 1996, p. 7). In my paper I will explore traumatic *aporia* in relation to the figure of the survivor, as depicted in the works of Primo Levi. Survivorship is represented as a condition of radical exclusion – the survivor cannot speak on behalf of the community which experienced catastrophe directly – but also, paradoxically, as a form of initiation, which entails heightened awareness and a moral obligation towards community. Trauma causes exclusion, but it also allows the survivor to stand outside the world and to see the whole of it. Apocalyptic discourse offers an important analogy, which remains implicit in Levi, but which is explored directly by other Holocaust survivors: if severe traumatic experience can only be conveyed by a catastrophic rupture of narrative possibility (see J.-F. Lyotard, *The Inhuman*, 1991), survivorship may be understood as a reinclusion of the undifferentiated into a new order, or, metaphorically, as the creation of a new space. As I intend to show, spatial metaphors are central to Levi's works. While trauma narrative insists on the unreliability of temporal order, it also highlights the importance of marginality and centrality, two dominant tropes, which describe the relation between individual and community.

### **Áine O’Healy (Loyola Marymount) *Homosocial fantasy and feminine alterity from Io l’altro to Cover Boy***

In a recent study of contemporary cinema in Europe, Thomas Elsaesser proposed a shift away from the binary - or specular - mode of critical thought that has underpinned dominant approaches to identity and otherness in film theory and criticism. Acknowledging that traditional understandings of nation and state are being transformed in paradoxical and countervailing ways in Europe today, Elsaesser argues that the concepts of identity, subjectivity, history and temporality, which have characterized discussions of European cinema(s) in the past few decades, have been rendered problematical in light of changing geopolitical realities. Italy’s burgeoning ‘cinema of migration’ offers a useful terrain on which to scrutinize the shifting patterns of identification that have marked the Italian imaginary since the end of the Cold War era. The focus of this paper is a comparative analysis of a handful of films that explore affinities and points of contact between Italian (male) citizens and non-Italian migrants who are attempting to achieve economic survival in the social landscape of contemporary Italy. Both Mohsen Melliti’s *Io, l’altro* (2005) and Carmine Amoroso’s *Cover Boy* (2007), for example, locate their protagonists in different forms of intersubjectivity and mutual interdependence, while pointedly engaging with issues of exclusion and inclusion in a contemporary migratory context. In both films an alienated, disenfranchised Italian male develops a friendship with an immigrant living in similarly precarious economic circumstances. Each of the narratives draws an implicit parallel between the Italian and the marginalized foreigner, as an affective bond is consolidated between the men, built on the shared experience of marginalization and mutual sense of non-belonging. Here, as in other Italian films of migration, we can discern a pattern of transnational homosocial romance where female figures occupy a peripheral if crucially problematical space. In short, the emergence or irruption of a female character into the *mise en-scène* often signals a breaking point, an impasse that disrupts a burgeoning bond between men. Ultimately, this paper will explore how Woman continues to function as a figure of absolute alterity in the contemporary cinematic imagination, despite the filmmakers’ efforts to complicate binary mechanisms of identity/otherness or identification/ disidentification across various fields of difference, including race, national provenance, and social class.

### **Catherine O’Rawe (Bristol) *Masculinity, otherness and the cinema of impegno***

This paper will examine the ways in which contemporary Italian middlebrow cinema on political themes has worked to imagine the Italian nation and its recent history through a series of exclusions: in particular, films such as *La meglio gioventù* (Giordana, 2003), *Mio fratello è figlio unico* (Luchetti, 2007), and *I cento passi* (Giordana, 2000), have discursively constructed a nation whose threatening ‘others’ are the abject feminine, and a feminized political extremism. Such films, I argue, rely on a discourse of *impegno* which is exclusively homosocial and ‘masculinist’ (O’Leary 2007) as their underpinning structure, only for the ‘queering’ threat of the homosocial to be safely resolved in the name of ‘reproductive futurity’ (Edelman 2004). I will ask what is at stake for film-makers in this construction of Italian political history through the lens of such troublesome male bonds.

### **Francesca Orsi (Roma Sapienza) *Il ritratto della follia***

Dalla metà del XIX secolo fino all'inizio del XX la fotografia è stata costantemente ancella della scienza psichiatrica. Dalla metà dello scorso secolo, invece, tale servilismo cessò di manifestarsi, tramutando il mezzo fotografico in un fondamentale elemento di denuncia e anche di terapia. Primo uso ottocentesco della fotografia, all'interno degli ospedali psichiatrici, fu quello segnaletico. La cartella clinica veniva corredata dal ritratto fotografico a mezzo busto del paziente internato, agevolandone il riconoscimento e velocizzandone la perdita dell'identità. Ando Gilardi lo chiama 'il momento della spoliazione', un marchio in cui l'uomo perdeva le proprie peculiarità di individuo e diventava semplicemente un numero, portato sia fisicamente che psicologicamente verso l'istituzionalizzazione. In questa fase, solitamente era un infermiere che si improvvisava fotografo. La fotografia, in quel periodo, inoltre, agevolava l'avvicinarsi dell'approccio clinico in cui tutto doveva essere visibile e misurabile, in parallelo con la scienza fisiognomica di Cesare Lombroso che ormai aveva preso piede. Nel pieno vigore della scienza psichiatrica (importante la legge del 1904 che prevedeva il ricovero obbligatorio per tutti i pazienti classificati come 'socialmente pericolosi') il mezzo fotografico, a cavallo tra il XIX secolo e il XX, si rese fautore della sua propaganda. Gli ospedali psichiatrici venivano immortalati nel loro ordine e nel loro rigore. I laboratori erano asettici e puliti, i dormitori ben sistemati, nei refettori nulla era fuori posto. L'ostentazione della perfezione era palpabile. Per tale motivo i pazienti difficilmente venivano ritratti, e se ciò avveniva comparivano nel loro essere produttivi, durante qualche laboratorio ergoterapico. In questa fase, per avere una migliore resa d'immagine era richiesto un fotografo professionista. Ne è esempio Oreste Bertani a Venezia, Strobel a Trieste e Giuseppe Fantuzzi a Reggio Emilia, il quale con le sue immagini dell'ospedale San Lazzaro, nel 1900, partecipò anche all'Esposizione Universale di Parigi. L'approccio fotografico alla 'malattia mentale' cambiò radicalmente durante la metà del XX secolo. Con l'ondata rivoluzionaria degli anni sessanta, sia in Italia che nel resto del mondo, le immagini fotografiche degli ospedali psichiatrici si fecero portavoce di una denuncia voluta urlare a squarciagola. La messa a fuoco si spostò dall'istituzione al paziente, sulle condizioni disumane in cui era costretto. Richard Avedon in America e Luciano D'Alessandro in Italia furono i primi a fare dei reportage a riguardo: il primo nel 1963 all'East Louisiana State Hospital di Jackson, il secondo nel 1965 al Materdomini di Nocera Superiore. Di grandissima importanza, inoltre, 'Morire di classe', reportage fotografico di Carla Cerati e Gianni Berengo Gardin, pubblicato da Einaudi nel 1969, che diventò bandiera dell'intero movimento anti-psichiatrico di Franco Basaglia.

### **Emiliano Perra (Bristol) *La prima guerra del Libano (1982) e la costruzione dell'ebreo come 'altro' nel dibattito pubblico italiano***

L'invasione israeliana del Libano del 1982 rappresentò un punto di svolta nella percezione di Israele nell'opinione pubblica internazionale. In Italia, la polemica in seguito all'intervento militare deciso dal governo Begin assunse toni particolarmente infuocati, in mezzo a una serie di episodi di intolleranza culminati nell'uccisione del piccolo Stefano Tachè davanti alla Sinagoga di Roma. Gli eventi del 1982 segnarono uno spartiacque per le singole comunità ebraiche italiane e nei rapporti tra esse e il più ampio contesto nazionale, soprattutto con vasti settori della sinistra, le cui conseguenze sono ancora in parte presenti. Attraverso l'analisi di pubblicazioni periodiche, programmi televisivi (tra i quali *Sorgente di vita*), e documenti d'archivio, il paper analizza i modi attraverso i quali il nesso tra sionismo, ebraismo e italianità venne declinato in quella particolare congiuntura storica. Le polemiche che fecero seguito in Italia all'invasione del Libano riattivarono, seppur in forma diversa dal passato, alcune dinamiche tese alla costruzione della minoranza ebraica come portatrice di valori 'altri' rispetto a quelli della comunità nazionale.

**Stefania Pontrandolfo (Verona) *Dall'assimilazione al rifiuto delle politiche del riconoscimento: antropologia storica della 'comunità rom' di Melfi***

L'articolo presenta parte dei risultati di una ricerca sull'antropologia storica di una 'comunità' rom dell'Italia meridionale, radicata da diversi secoli a Melfi (Basilicata). Si tratta di una 'comunità rom' di antico insediamento che assume oggi la configurazione di una comunità 'invisibile', poiché i 'melfitani rom' non hanno conservato alcuno dei tratti culturali (nomadismo, lingua romaní, endogamia, ecc.) che hanno caratterizzato tutte le descrizioni della loro comunità in un passato non troppo lontano (fino agli anni '60). Le modalità di integrazione dei melfitani rom nel tessuto sociale locale fanno dunque dubitare, oggi, della presenza stessa di una 'comunità'. Per ricostituire le modalità di un cambiamento sociale così profondo, in una situazione di 'silenzio etnografico', dovuto al fatto che la maggior parte degli abitanti di Melfi (di origine rom e non) si rifiuta di parlare pubblicamente dei 'rom' locali, arrivando a negare la loro stessa esistenza, si è fatto ricorso in modo congiunto della ricerca etnografica e d'archivio. La storia del trattamento amministrativo di questa comunità e delle strategie messe in atto dai rom di fronte a questo trattamento è ricostruita in base a documenti di diversi archivi istituzionali (in particolare gli archivi parrocchiali, scolastici e dell'Ufficio di Polizia di Melfi). Questa storia permette di rilevare, per il periodo post-unitario, l'attuazione di politiche di assimilazione nei confronti dei rom, condotte con metodi più o meno repressivi (a seconda dell'istituzione considerata) particolarmente efficaci: tali politiche hanno di fatto innescato il lento processo di assimilazione della comunità rom di Melfi alla comunità di paese. L'etnografia permette a sua volta di rilevare nel presente un deciso rifiuto a livello locale delle retoriche-politiche del riconoscimento della differenza culturale di rom e sinti, che si sono gradualmente affermate in Italia a partire dal secondo dopoguerra. Sembra oggi delinearsi in Italia una sorta di doppio binario delle politiche del riconoscimento che dà adito a diverse forme di mobilitazione e di pratica politica. Da una parte il riconoscimento di un'identità 'nomade' (a livello istituzionale), dall'altra il riconoscimento di un'identità etnoculturale di 'rom e sinti' (a livello di movimenti di rivendicazione dei diritti di queste comunità da parte di associazioni pro-zingare o zingare). Il caso di Melfi, tuttavia, oggi si distingue proprio per la predominanza di un rifiuto di qualsiasi retorica-politica del riconoscimento. L'analisi storica combinata all'interpretazione etnografica permette, infine, di leggere la situazione attuale di Melfi come la logica conclusione di un lungo processo di assimilazione che ha portato alla dissoluzione della comunità rom del passato nella comunità di paese, piuttosto che come persistenza di una resistenza all'assimilazione attraverso strategie tradizionali di invisibilità e silenzio, come rilevato da altri ricercatori presso altre comunità di rom e sinti italiani.

**Alessandro Portelli (Roma Sapienza) *Rome, memory and language***

Rome has such a heavy and long history that contemporary memory is sometimes apparently crushed underneath its weight. The richest veins of contemporary memory, therefore, are to be found on the margins and among newcomers to the city, in the peripheries and among immigrants. I will discuss the history of memory in Rome on the basis of two major projects – on the homeless and the *baraccati* in the 1970s and in Centocelle in the 1990s, with some remarks on the different ways in which World War II, the Resistance and the air raids are remembered in those contexts. The presentation will include excerpts from interviews and music.

### **Lucia Re (UCLA) *Women and the politics of difference in the struggle over Libya, 1910-1912***

The Italian invasion of Libya in October 1911, and the declaration of its annexation a month later, triggered a powerful wave of resistance by the Arab and Berber populations, and the beginning of the bloodiest phase of the conflict. On 19 November the feminist novelist and poet Sibilla Aleramo published in *Il Marzocco* an article entitled 'L'ora virile' in which she wrote: 'la guerra fra paese e paese, fra nazione e nazione, fra razza e razza, la guerra col ferro e col fuoco, non è una creazione della donna. Nondimeno essa l'accetta, al pari dell'uomo ... L'Italia che si scopre oggi grande, è costituita di uomini e di donne'. This text is interesting not only because its rhetoric aestheticizes the colonial war, but also because it dramatically signals the end of feminist pacifism in Italy, shortly after the bitter defeat of suffragism. The war in Africa successfully displaced the gender war. The escalation of the Libyan war and of the racist campaign in the press in fact coincided with the electoral reform finally ratified by parliament in May 1912, a reform that, while widening the male electorate, once again denied women the vote, excluding them entirely from representation and political citizenship and effectively splitting the nation along gender lines. Although this coincidence has attracted little or no commentary, it in fact has a historic significance that Aleramo's text contributes to bring to light. By adhering to the unifying notion of a collective racial identity which necessarily sets the Italian race in opposition to other races, women 'discover' (*si scopre*) an imaginary sense of belonging and commonality that makes the lack of equal political rights, and even the principle of representation, seem secondary and unimportant. In the 'higher,' racial sense, Italy is, in Aleramo's words, '*costituita di uomini e di donne*,' and is thus greater and truly one. This paper analyzes the complex strategic reaction to the Libyan campaign by prominent female intellectuals and feminists, including Aleramo, Grazia Deledda, Matilde Serao, Margherita Sarfatti, Teresa Labriola and Anna Kuliscioff.

### **Charlotte Ross (Warwick) *Discourses and counterdiscourses of lesbian subjectivity***

If the – now contested – discourses of late nineteenth-century Italian thinkers such as Cesare Lombroso defined lesbian sexuality as a form of degeneration caused by hereditary abnormalities, recent cultural texts have begun to assert that lesbianism falls decidedly within the norm: one striking example is Nanni Moretti's film *Il caimano* (2006) in which Teresa's lesbian relationship and the role of lesbian mother she shares with her partner are depicted as rooted in the family structure that is (so the Constitution tells us), the fabric of Italian society, while Bruno Bonomo's nuclear heterosexual family disintegrates. Here the lesbian relationship actually trumps the heterosexual one in terms of apparent future viability. However, while the wheel may appear to have come full circle, many tensions persist around ongoing demands by the LGBTQ population in Italy for the legalisation of civil partnerships, adoption rights and assisted reproduction, not least for lesbians who do not wish to be assimilated into normative monogamous partnerships, models of family life and motherhood. Against dominant (heteronormative) discourses which interpellate and enable certain modalities of identity whilst stifling others, this paper engages with verbal and visual articulations of lesbian counterdiscourses. Butler has argued (building on the work of Foucault), that we need to be intelligible to others in order to exist culturally. I consider how this intelligibility has been variously attempted, achieved or avoided by lesbian-identified women through the semiotic presentation of self, paying attention to the shifting cultural significance of verbal and visual signs, especially to the often fraught domestication of anglophone discourses in recent years. My aim is to trace and analyse evolving expressions of lesbian subjectivity as they oscillate between

proclaiming a decisive, defiant difference from the norm and desiring to be located within mainstream cultural and social discourses. I draw (brief) examples from early twentieth-century and recent Italian literary and film production (including: Aleramo's *Il passaggio*, 1919; Mura's *Perfidie*, 1919; Maraini's *Lettere a Marina*, 1981; Mazzucco's *Il bacio della medusa*, 1996; Stancanelli's, *Benzina*, 1998, and Stambrini's film adaptation, 2001; Cagnoni's *Arsenico* 2001; Alicata's *Quattro*, 2009), and from work done by activists and historians to chronicle and excavate lesbian lives and political activism (Gramolini, Ibry et al. *Il movimento delle lesbiche in Italia*, 2007; Passerini and Milletti, *Fuori dalla norma*, 2007). I also refer to recent ethnographic surveys (Sonego et al. eds, *Cocktail d'amore*, 2005), and strip cartoons (the work of Sara and Valeria Santini). With reference to these examples, I argue that while heteronormative authoritative discourses remain strong (e.g. the Vatican view), and lesbian subjectivity can only be expressed as a counter discourse, these counterdiscourses are emphatically plural and one strand at least is increasingly aligned with the 'norm', challenging and enlarging its boundaries. My theoretical framework is provided by work on lesbian identities (Sally Munt's work on 'gay shame', Laura Doane's exploration of the 'lesbian postmodern' and Teresa De Lauretis' notion of the 'eccentric subject'), as well as queer theory more broadly.

### **Lidia Santarelli (NYU) *The Balkans as a European Africa: coloniality, racism and political sovereignty in the Italian living space***

Africa and the Balkans have been generally considered as separate spheres of Italy's territorial expansion. Studies on modern Italian history have usually drawn a rigid geographical, chronological, and conceptual distinction between Italian *colonialism* in Africa, and so-called fascist wartime *imperialism* in Europe. Despite the dramatic increase in scholarship on both Italian colonization of Africa, and Italian occupation of the Balkans during World War II, Africa and the Balkans still remain unrelated topics of historical analysis in most of the studies focusing on the Italian colonial experience. This paper will investigate the theoretical construction of the Mediterranean as a colonial space in Italian politics and culture, from the early twenty-century Nationalism to the fascist period. To that end, I will discuss how, since its very inception, Italian colonial expansion developed along the twofold trajectory of Africa, and the Red Sea, on the one hand, and South-eastern Europe, and the Middle East, on the other hand. In so doing, I will analyse how the political myth of the Mediterranean as *mare nostrum* gave shape to mirrored, interconnected, and mutually interdependent images of Africa, the Balkans, and the *Levante*. From this perspective, I will explore the circulation of themes, theories, and rhetorical strategies from Italian colonial studies relating to Africa, to the inter-war theoretical debate focusing on South-eastern Europe. Concentrating on theories and representation of the Mediterranean as the Italian *living space*, this paper will discuss the fascist geopolitical concept of *Eurafrica*, -- which envisioned the idea of a political and economic integration between Europe and Africa under an Italian-led Mediterranean empire. I will highlight how throughout the 1930s the project for an Italian Mediterranean *living space*, stretching from Africa to the Balkans and Anatolia, up to the Middle East and the Indian Ocean, was articulated through the lenses of the fascist state theory. In the fascist political culture the Mediterranean became a theoretical site, one designed to resolve the ideological transition from the model of a totalitarian nation state, to that of a totalitarian, supra-continental, racially structured, empire. Within this framework, I will discuss how, beginning in the late 1930s, the colonization of European peoples and countries raised problems different in nature from those emerged during the colonization of Africa. In fact, the incorporation of South-eastern Europe into the Italian *living space* required a process of violent denationalization, in order to reshape ethnic, racial, and political borders across the Balkans and the Eastern Mediterranean. On a theoretical level, racism provided a key instrument to disarticulate principles of nations and nationalities, and justify the dismantling of existing nation-

states, such as Greece, and Yugoslavia. Focusing on fascist anti-Hellenic and anti-Slavic theories, this paper will stress how the negative myths of the Balkans, and of the *Levante*, which had been shaped by Italian Nationalism at the beginning of the century, were later appropriated by the fascist regime. Beginning in the mid-1930s, anti-Hellenic theories were systematically articulated in magazines focusing on culture, arts, history and archaeology, --as well as on political economy and international politics--, in close relation with the debate over the project for a Mediterranean Empire. Fascist theorists of the Italian *living space* interposed the paradigm of ethnic heritage between ancient and modern Greece, --which from the nineteenth century onwards had represented the major principle of legitimacy of the Greek nation state-- with that of racial decadence. This paper will emphasise how a major role in shaping fascist anti-Hellenic and anti-Slavic theories was played by contemporary anti-Semitic discourse and colonial studies. In this regard, I will document how on the eve of the outbreak of the World War II in Europe, fascist culture transferred notions, principles and disciplines, such as ethnography and physiognomy, from colonial studies to its debates focused on South-eastern Europe. The same intellectuals, scientists, and academics who in the early 1930s had emerged as the leading figures of Italian colonial studies on Libya and Ethiopia, then theorized the supposed anthropological inferiority of both Slavs and Greeks. Theories on racial contamination between Aryan and non-Aryan races directly correlated Africa to the Balkans: the *meticcio* was said to be no longer only an *African* problem, being also a *European* phenomenon. The new theories on European *meticcio* identified modern Greeks as the product of the racial contamination between ethnic groups of Slavic and Semitic origins, in this case meaning Jews, Levantines and Armenians. Along these lines, I will discuss how the *Eurafrica* project implied not only the hierarchal integration between Europe and Africa, in light of the principle of an asymmetric power relation between colonizers and colonized, but also the racial and anthropological reduction of the Balkans to a colonial periphery of Europe. In this sense, I will suggest that, in terms of symbolic geography, mental mapping, and the construction of both racial and ethnic borders, the project for the Italian *living space* in the Mediterranean engendered a process of *africanization* of South-eastern Europe.

**Nando Sigona (University of Oxford/Oxford Brookes) *From the construction of the ‘emergenza nomadi’ to the reconfiguration of the ‘gypsy problem’: political discourse, public policy and bureaucratic practice on Roma and Sinti in Italy***

By reviewing political discourse, public policy and bureaucratic practice on Roma and Sinti in Italy, this paper argues that since 2007, when for the first time the Italian Government declared the so called ‘emergenza nomadi’, we have witnessed the reconfiguration, in many parts of Italy, of the governance of the Romani population. This process, by no means homogeneous, is marked by the transfer of competencies previously held by local and regional authorities to central government. In particular, through the appointment of Special Commissioners for the ‘emergenza nomadi’, the Ministry of the Interior has succeeded to centralize in Rome the competence for policy making on Roma and Sinti’s settlement and integration. The paper outlines some of the consequences and implications of this process.

**Lorenza Stradiotti (Amherst) *Kay e Constance a Cremona: cantante afro-americana o immigrante?***

Quando Constance Foster, in arte Kay Foster Jackson, lascia Atlanta, GA, nel 1997 per stabilirsi a Cremona a tempo indeterminato e fare del canto la sua professione a tempo pieno, è profondamente consapevole di stare saltando nel buio. Lascia casa, lavoro e madre nella capitale georgiana per inseguire un sogno e una missione allo stesso tempo. Non conosce l’italiano e i

suoi unici contatti umani in Italia sono il suo manager, lo stesso che le ha suggerito di tentare questa grande avventura del diffondere la *black music* nella realtà musicale italiana, e una curiosa diciassettenne cremonese, innamorata della cultura afroamericana, conosciuta per caso durante una lezione di canto. Lezione che segnerà l'inizio di una amicizia profonda e di un continuo scambio culturale e spirituale che dura fino ad oggi. Kay galvanizza il pubblico con la sua voce intensa e le sue interpretazioni. È ammirata, apprezzata, richiesta. Il colore della sua pelle si meschia a quello della sua voce e grazie all'eco della tradizione *blues* e *gospel* il pubblico resta ammaliato. Il campo è sgombro da ogni interferenza di tipo razziale. O così sembra. Siamo nel mondo della musica in cui l'arte del *sound* e del *groove* infrange ogni barriera culturale. Ma quando lo spettacolo finisce e Kay scende dal palco, si torna alla realtà. Anzi si entra in un'altra realtà, parallela si potrebbe dire. Quella in cui Kay Foster Jackson, figlia del sassofonista di B.B. King, Melvin Jackson, e della ex-vocalist Mary Ann Jackson, tornando nel suo piccolo appartamento di Cremona, passa al mercato per fare la spesa e all'occhio miope del passante è solo una donna nera. Un'altra immigrata: che lotta per riuscire ad affittare una casa e aprire un conto in banca, che all'inizio non sa se riuscirà a pagare il prossimo affitto perché gli ingaggi sono pochi, che ogni volta che si trova davanti allo sportello di un ufficio pubblico deve sostenere lo sguardo inquisitore e pregiudizievole dell'impiegato fino a quando, mostrando il passaporto, la parola magica, *american*, alleggerisce la situazione. Almeno non è un'altra immigrata africana, bisogna solo cercare qualcuno che parli inglese...La strada verso l'*Italian Dream* sembra essere più lunga ed insidiosa del previsto. L'arte ha davvero il potere di smantellare il pregiudizio? O forse veicola un messaggio di provvisorietà: mentre Constance è Kay, il suo personaggio è perfetto. Quando Kay ritorna Constance, la sua persona passa dai riflettori alla luce opaca della quotidianità in cui il colore della pelle la classifica da subito nel mondo dei non benvenuti, dei circospetti. E allo stesso tempo il suo essere *anche* americana la mette in una posizione diversa, ancor più ibrida, rispetto agli altri immigrati, posizione che offre una ulteriore chiave di lettura del ruolo degli Stati Uniti nell'immaginario collettivo italiano. Perché chiedere a Kay, così come ai suoi colleghi afro-americani che lavorano in Italia, di fingere sul palcoscenico di non saper parlare italiano, anche dopo cinque o sei anni dall'arrivo? 'Perché così la gente continua a vederti come appena arrivata dall'America. Altrimenti, se capiscono che vivi qui, perdono interesse'. In altre parole il suo status artistico dipende da quanto la sua presenza in Italia è direttamente proporzionale alla probabilità di andarsene. Scoprire che la cantante americana in realtà sta cercando di integrarsi nella società italiana la priverebbe dell'esoticità che la rende così apprezzata, accettata e *accettabile*. Parole da manager italiano che amplificano una percezione della cultura altrui come puro folklore, con un valore circostanziale e di intrattenimento, con un inizio ed una fine ben precisi. A questi più o meno velati messaggi di intolleranza Kay risponde a ritmo di blues, sposando un cittadino ivoriano residente da molti anni a Cremona e, punto nodale di questa sua 'retorica di vita' così personale e così universale allo stesso tempo, fondando un coro gospel italiano, *The Free Voices*. Con Kay l'arte può ancora essere un mezzo di comunicazione reale e non solo strumento dello *show business*. Nei nove anni vissuti nella piccola cittadina lombarda, Kay e Constance passano l'una nei panni dell'altra in un continuo vestirsi e svestirsi del ruolo dell'artista e dell'immigrante. Sono nove anni ricchi di episodi illuminanti e vittoriosi a volte, denigranti e frustranti altre, che meritano di essere raccontati. Perché raccontando questi si ricostruisce uno spaccato della cultura contemporanea italiana che ha sempre più bisogno di essere discussa, interpretata, e più di ogni altra cosa, *sprovincializzata*. Si tratta del provincialismo culturale dell'italiano medio che ha perso la memoria del suo passato di emigrante, e che non sa più riconoscere e valorizzare la ricchezza dell'alterità e del coraggio che l'accompagna. Un provincialismo da decostruire a colpi di 'domande scomode' e 'contro-racconti'.

### **Sabrina Tosi Cambini (Firenze) *La migrazione di una rete di famiglie romene in Italia: luoghi urbani, spazi identitari e negoziazioni politiche***

Quattro anni fa più di trecento persone immigrate (nella maggior parte famiglie di rudari provenienti dal sud est della Romania) occupano – grazie al sostegno di un movimento di base – un ex istituto sanitario alle porte di Firenze lasciato abbandonato da otto anni. Per le dimensioni e per l'allarme lanciato dal Sindaco del Comune ove ha sede la struttura, l'occupazione attrae l'interesse specifico anche di altri Sindaci dei territori limitrofi, la Regione, la Prefettura ed infine il Ministero degli Interni. Sui giornali si arriva a parlare addirittura dell'occupazione 'più a rischio d'Italia'. Ma chi ci abita? Pochissime sono le associazioni che entrano all'interno della proprietà, sono gli stessi occupanti – in particolar modo con la preziosa collaborazione degli italiani anch'essi occupanti – ad auto-organizzarsi: dall'iscrizione dei bambini a scuola alla richiesta del tesserino STP (attivabile in Toscana anche per i cittadini comunitari che non possono accedere al SSN). I residenti della zona si accorgono dei nuovi abitanti da quello che leggono e sentono attraverso i mass-media e dall'aumento esponenziale delle persone che utilizzano l'unico mezzo pubblico urbano che dal centro della città porta in quelle strade. E protestano, assieme ai circoli limitrofi. La ricerca ancora in fieri e che per approccio e metodologie si situa all'interno dell'antropologia urbana – e di cui questo paper presenta i primi risultati – ha considerato questa occupazione un case-study capace di legare insieme:

- temi riguardanti lo spazio urbano, le sue trasformazioni e la sua produzione di gerarchie. Si tratta infatti di un'occupazione, viene promosso un tavolo di negoziazione per, da una parte, non far sgomberare le persone, dall'altra non far cadere gli immobili e il parco occupati nelle reti della speculazione edilizia;
- politiche di welfare. Le persone all'interno divengono poi 'utenti' o comunque pensati come soggetti 'da collocare in progetti di inserimento'; contemporaneamente la loro presenza è inquadrata anche all'interno del discorso securitario);
- flussi migratori e strategie 'emiche'.

La ricerca richiede uno sguardo, dunque, sul *qui* e il *là* (luogo di immigrazione e luogo di emigrazione); sulle scelte e le strategie anche "identitarie" delle famiglie; sulla negoziazione in merito alla natura e tipologia degli interventi fra i vari attori che sono implicati (Regione, Comuni, Prefettura e Questura, Enti religiosi, Terzo settore, Movimenti di base, e le Famiglie). Negoziazione in cui si rintracciano complessi elementi, almeno: modi di vivere la migrazione e modi di interpretarla all'interno di determinati contesti spazio-temporali, politiche sociali-abitative e politiche securitarie, contesto nazionale e panorama europeo.

### **Paola Trevisan (Verona) *Da girovaghi a sinti: un percorso attraverso le categorizzazioni dell'alterità fra gli 'zingari' del Nord Italia***

Gli 'zingari' italiani sono stati oggetto di una complessa serie di categorizzazioni e trattamenti amministrativi che hanno dato luogo ad una delle più significative costruzioni d'alterità all'interno dello Stato nazionale. I gruppi 'zingari' di antico insediamento nel territorio italiano utilizzano *autodenominazioni* differenti, che seguono approssimativamente una divisione fra il Centro-Nord del Paese, dove sono presenti gruppi sinti e il Centro-Sud, in cui sono presenti diverse comunità rom. Sulla base di ricerche storiche ed etnografiche si propone una ricostruzione delle categorizzazioni/definizioni degli 'zingari' a partire da fine '800 fino ai giorni nostri, con particolare riferimento ai sinti. Questi ultimi sono stati a lungo inseriti all'interno di una categoria più ampia – quella dei girovaghi – fino agli anni '30-'40, periodo in cui il regime fascista

li individua in quanto 'zingari italiani' e mette in atto politiche repressive nei loro confronti; a partire dagli anni '60 al termine 'zingaro' si sostituisce man mano quello di 'nomade' che si accompagna alle prime forme di associazionismo a favore di questa popolazione. Solo alla fine del XX secolo molte comunità sinte hanno scelto di presentarsi con questo *etnonimo*, facendo in parte proprie le retoriche del *riconoscimento* della diversità culturale già ampiamente diffuse nel linguaggio politico attuale. Saranno quindi esplorati alcuni eventi storici di particolare criticità per il posizionamento degli 'zingari' nella realtà italiana come, ad esempio, la loro scarsa visibilità all'interno del nascente stato nazionale, il periodo fascista, le politiche 'a favore delle popolazioni nomadi' avviate a partire dagli anni '60, fino a giungere all'ultima attuale restrizione dei diritti di cittadinanza che riguarda questa 'speciale' categoria di cittadini italiani. Si indagheranno le categorizzazioni utilizzate dalle istituzioni a livello centrale e a livello locale, con particolare attenzione al modo in cui i diversi gruppi sinti vi hanno fatto fronte, a volte cercando di sottrarsi e a volte facendole proprie con finalità differenti da quelle prospettate a livello istituzionale, nel tentativo di resistere alle pressioni esercitate dalla società maggioritaria. L'utilizzo, in parallelo, di fonti archivistiche, ricerche etnografiche, storie di vita e saggi sul mondo degli spettacoli di piazza, permette di cogliere le tattiche e le strategie messe in atto dai differenti attori sociali coinvolti in questa costruzione dell'alterità, in primis quelle utilizzate dai sinti stessi.

**Antonella Valoroso (Umbra Institute, Perugia) *Storie di teatro e di follia nei manicomi di Aversa: dagli esperimenti ottocenteschi all'attività del gruppo Insania Teatro***

L'11 marzo 1813 il re di Napoli, Gioacchino Murat, istituì ad Aversa con un regio decreto il primo manicomio civile italiano. La struttura iniziò la sua attività il 5 maggio 1813 con il titolo della Maddalena di Aversa nel convento de' Zoccolanti, ed ospitò soltanto folli di sesso maschile. Con un nuovo decreto del 10 giugno 1813, si istituì poi la Casa dei Matti delle donne presso il Convento dei Cappuccini di Aversa. Nel 1821 alle prime due si aggiunse la Casa di Montevergine e nel 1837, sempre ad Aversa, quella di S. Agostino degli Scalzi. Le Reali Case dei Matti di Aversa divennero in poco tempo il fiore all'occhiello della dinastia dei Borboni. Qui i pazzi, tra cure e sperimentazioni, iniziarono ad organizzarsi ed esprimersi con spettacoli teatrali di loro ideazione. Nel 1826 le attività teatrali delle Case dei Matti vennero regolamentate dal direttore Giovanni Linguiti che stabilì che solo il medico aveva la facoltà di decidere quali matti potessero recitare commedie nel teatro delle Case. Linguiti era convinto che la rappresentazione di spettacoli potesse costituire uno strumento utile ai fini della terapia, ma in un secondo momento l'utilizzo del teatro nelle Case dei Matti venne soppresso perché si pensava che potesse nuocere agli infermi. Dopo l'unificazione nazionale, il nuovo direttore Biagio Miraglia decise di riprendere le attività teatrali nell'Ospedale Psichiatrico con la costruzione di un teatro e di una scuola per le esercitazioni drammatiche. Il 15 giugno del 1862, dopo un'accurata preparazione, Miraglia portò la filodrammatica dell'Ospedale al Teatro del Fondo di Napoli. I suoi folli si esibirono, tra l'ammirazione generale degli spettatori, nella tragedia *Bruto Primo* di Vittorio Alfieri, cantando in coro alla fine del terzo atto l'inno a Vittorio Emanuele, musicato da un alienato del Reale Manicomio – il maestro C. Fontana – e poi il *Coro dei Lombardi* di Giuseppe Verdi. Spronato dall'entusiasmo con cui gli spettatori e gli studiosi avevano accolto il suo primo esperimento, circa un anno dopo, e precisamente il 6 marzo del 1863, lo scienziato riportò nello stesso teatro i suoi malati di mente. Quella sera, tra gli innumerevoli spettatori vi era anche Alessandro Dumas padre che, colpito da quanto aveva udito e visto, sentì il bisogno di visitare la Maddalena di Aversa. Sempre ad Aversa, nel 1876, viene istituito il primo Ospedale Psichiatrico Giudiziario d'Italia. La fondazione dell'OPG rafforza ulteriormente l'identificazione tra la città e le strutture

manicomiali: Aversa diventa a tutti gli effetti (e rimarrà a lungo) 'la città dei pazzi', e l'Ospedale Psichiatrico S.M. Maddalena assume sempre più l'aspetto di una 'città nella città', un'entità fortemente presente nel tessuto urbano e sociale ma al tempo stesso distante e inaccessibile. Anche le buone intenzioni che avevano determinato la fondazione delle Reali Case dei Matti lasciano ben presto il posto a una storia di abusi, emarginazione e degrado lunga più di un secolo e non dissimile da quella degli altri istituti presenti sul territorio nazionale. Dopo l'approvazione della Legge 180 (1978) la situazione aversana, date le storiche carenze politico-amministrative presenti nel sud d'Italia, si è tuttavia rivelata più problematica che altrove, con notevoli ritardi nell'attuazione del previsto piano regionale per la dismissione dei manicomi. Se la politica ha faticato a fare la sua parte, l'iniziativa autonoma di associazioni e volontari presenti sul territorio ha tuttavia dato vita ad esperienze altamente significative che hanno avuto il merito di abbattere i muri reali e ideali che, quasi venti anni dopo l'approvazione della Legge 180, ancora separavano i 'pazzi' dal resto della cittadinanza. Particolarmente significativo – anche per il suo carattere di 'ritorno alle origini' – è stato il lavoro svolto dall'Associazione Culturale Insania Teatro che, attraverso attività di tipo teatrale e creativo, ha contribuito a restituire una nuova dignità ai pazienti affetti da disagio mentale agevolando il loro reinserimento nella cosiddetta 'società civile'. L'associazione Insania Teatro, coordinata da Anna Gioia Trasacco, inizia la sua attività nel 1996, anno in cui la compagnia venne invitata a partecipare alla riconversione degli spazi dell'Ospedale Psichiatrico di Aversa. Proprio all'interno dell'OP, nell'ambito della manifestazione *Polifonie e Polifollie*, viene rappresentato *Appunti per Maddalena*: uno studio realizzato con alcuni malati di mente ospiti della struttura psichiatrica. Tra i pazienti coinvolti c'è anche Bobò. All'anagrafe si chiama Vincenzo Cannavacciuolo ed ha sessant'anni, trenta dei quali passati all'interno della Maddalena. Bobò è sordomuto, microcefalo e presenta problemi di deambulazione, ma possiede una straordinaria capacità espressiva che attira immediatamente l'attenzione dell'attore e regista genovese Pippo Delbono, che all'interno della Maddalena era stato invitato a tenere un laboratorio teatrale. Ben presto Bobò entrerà in maniera stabile nella compagnia del Delbono ricoprendo ruoli di primo piano in tutti i suoi spettacoli (una collaborazione che dura ancora oggi). La ricerca del gruppo Insania Teatro è rivolta soprattutto ai temi della follia, della reclusione e dell'emarginazione. Particolare attenzione è rivolta allo stile recitativo singolarmente essenziale ed espressivo che alcuni malati di mente mostrano di saper produrre. Nel 1997 il gruppo Insania Teatro viene invitato a condurre un laboratorio teatrale anche all'interno dell'OPG aversano 'F. Saporito'. Si tratta di un'esperienza decisamente singolare, se si considera che gli operatori di Insania Teatro affrontano questa nuova sfida anche con l'aiuto di alcuni pazienti dell'ex OP. Al termine di un anno di attività viene messo in scena un nuovo spettacolo – *Totale* – cui partecipano gli ospiti di entrambe le strutture psichiatriche. Con *Totale* il gruppo intende interrogarsi soprattutto sulla dolorosa realtà della reclusione sperimentando nuove espressività capaci di eludere i moduli accademici della rappresentazione. Dopo la chiusura dell'OP S.M. Maddalena nel 1998, l'attività di Insania Teatro è andata avanti ancora per un po' – e non senza difficoltà – all'interno dell'OPG. Nel 2002, con l'apertura del Centro di Salute Mentale di Aversa, l'attività di Insania Teatro continua proprio all'interno del CSM. Tra i risultati più significativi degli ultimi anni c'è senz'altro il cortometraggio *Romeo e Giulietta visti dall'alto* (2005), poetica rivisitazione della tragedia dei due sfortunati amanti di Verona.

**Tommaso Vitale (Milano Bicocca) *Levels of anti-gypsyism: a comparative historical approach to centre-periphery conflict in the political-administrative treatment of Roma and Sinti***

The main goal of this paper is to avoid the risk of considering the persecution against Roma as something transcendental and not contextualized. It is a very widespread attitude in the social science literature as well as in Roma activism and in anti-racist organizations. The first part will outline the main traits of this idea, how it is taken for granted and its implicit character; it will show how it is common both to 'nomad' rights proponents and to racist and anti-gypsy rhetoric. The second part will point out how this thesis conforms to a more general attitude of post-structuralist social criticism, centred as a whole on the victim's moral statute. The de-historicization has a perverse effect because it suggests that things cannot be otherwise: it generates *irreversibility effects*. Since it is expressed as a structural and temporally smooth datum with no discontinuity, the persecution thesis frustrates the thought of being able to invert the persecution processes that we watch. The third part will show how the thesis of a continuity of persecution has been sustained if not fomented by certain studies and by social-scientific literature. At the same time, it will draw attention also to a recent trend in sociology and anthropology towards better contextualization of their own research, the former by forging stronger links with historical research and the latter by aiming at comparative studies. The last part will focus on certain stages and contexts useful for proposing an explanation of the persecutions against gypsy groups in comparative-historical terms. The possibility of obtaining robust explanations of the recent hostility without producing feelings of fatalism and impotence in the reader is the strong point of a comparative historical approach.