

I TEMPLARI E LA SINDONE: L'“IPOTETICA DELLA FALSITÀ” E L'INVENZIONE DELLA STORIA

Massimo Vallerani

This article presents a critical review of Barbara Frale's book, *I Templari e la sindone di Cristo*. She maintains that the Knight Templars conserved the Turin shroud as a weapon against heresy. The theory is based on a partial and rather censored interpretation of original records upon a series of unproven hypothesis. Nevertheless, the book is an interesting example of how today's author of historical novels are inclined to confuse hypothesis with reality, thus creating a new narrative style that treats hypothetical proposition as real in order to fill in the blanks of a story and to recreate inexistent objects.

Key words: Knight Templars; Shroud; Trial; Fictional; Hypothesis; Newspaper.
Parole chiave: Templari; Sindone; Processo; Finzione; Ipotesi; Giornali.

UN OMAGGIO A SERGIO ROMANO? DELLA DIFFERENZA CHE CORRE TRA IL MESTIERE DI STORICO E IL MESTIERE DI COLUI CHE RACCONTA STORIE

Federico Trocini

Referring to Seneca's well-known satirical text, the article makes fun of the recent congress held in Sergio Romano's honour. Contesting both his supposed moderatism, and his historical journalism, the article wants to show the factiousness of his political orientation and, more importantly, to draw attention to the differences – primarily methodological – which distinguish the profession of the historian from that of someone who 'tell stories'.

Key words: Sergio Romano; Historian; Revisionism; Journalist; Moderatism; Berlusconism; Apocoloncyntosis.
Parole chiave: Sergio Romano; Storico; Revisionismo; Giornalista; Moderatismo; Berlusconismo; Apocolosintosi.

LA “LEGGENDA NERA” DELLO STALINISMO. INTORNO A UN DIBATTITO STORIOGRAFICO

Franco Milanesi

In the first part, the article analyzes Domenico Losurdo's book on Stalinism. He characterizes Stalinist repressions as above all a response to internal opposition and attacks from foreign nations. Losurdo points out how, in the 20th century, all kinds of regime resorted to extreme forms of violence. The author of the present article, even though he recognizes the validity of some of the arguments, criticizes the way Losurdo uses contextualization and comparison as ways of diminishing political and moral responsibilities.

In the second part of the article the author analyzes the debate in «Liberazione», the newspaper of the Rifondazione Comunista Party. In reviewing Losurdo's book, the newspaper has stirred up an outcry among some of the editors, generating a debate about some still unresolved crucial questions connected to Stalinism, and above all, questions linked to the cultural and political identity of the party itself.

Key words: Stalinism; Domenico Losurdo; Communism; Rifondazione Comunista; «Liberazione»; Historical Comparison.

Parole chiave: Stalinismo; Domenico Losurdo; Comunismo; Partito della Rifondazione Comunista; «Liberazione»; Comparazione.

TOPONOMASTICA NOSTALGICA. IL CASO GRANBASSI A TRIESTE

Claudio Venza

The “Granbassi Case” exploded in Trieste after the decision of the Communal council to re-name a public space in his honour. The honour of being a “fascist hero”. Mario Granbassi (1907-1939) was a journalist of the «Piccolo», a local newspaper, but above all a propagandist of the fascist regime. He conducted a fortuitous radio transmission, in the early thirties, “*Mastro Remo*” aimed at children and young adults and founded a specialized weekly magazine.

He died in Spain as a volunteer fighting on Franco’s side and was awarded, not only the gold metal, but also the name of the street. A street that in 1946 resumed its ancient name; that of Samuel Romanin, an historian wantonly canceled by the racial laws for being “non-arian”.

This past year has seen this continual controversy tighten between the council and the opponents who have written several letters and articles, organized press conferences and rallies in the contested site. The site consists of steps dedicated to Giuseppe Revere, a Trieste born Jewish Mazzini follower.

Key words: Granbassi; Trieste; the Racial Laws, Toponymic, Fascism, Spanish Civil War.

Parole chiave: Granbassi; Trieste; Leggi razziali, Toponomastica, Fascismo, Guerra civile spagnola.

TRA SICILIA E AMERICA: GLI “SCAPPATI” DI COSA NOSTRA

Alessandra Dino

Territorial control is one of the most important elements for the survival of the mafia. It is an obligated path to be able to obtain and control economic activities and to penetrate into all profitable sectors. Without territorial control it is impossible to control voters and without it all relationship with politics wither and die. It is within the territory where the imposition of “pizzo” (protection money) and extortion are planned against businesses and firms, this impeding presence is also the cause in which citizens and families find themselves submitted to violence, the abuse of power and, if not only, to a limitation to their sphere of action.

Telling the story about the *scappati* is to explain how, by their use of violence, *Cosa Nostra* has taken away from the State its lawful supremacy over large parts of the national territory. They planned the removal or deportation, under the threat of death, of entire families connected to the mafia. This story began in 1890 and is yet to be finished. The *scappati* migrated to the USA during the second mafia war and today they would like to come back to Palermo. However, not all agree with this possibility. The Sicilian mafia is in a critical position and if these refugees return it could produce a drastic and unexpected change in its leadership. Reading the *pizzini* (small notes of mafia members), analyzing these sources, reconstructing scenarios makes it is easy to image what could happen if they returned: a new bloody conflict among mafia families.

Key words: Cosa Nostra; Territorial Control, Transnational Crime; Maxi-Trial, Mafia Wars; *The Scappati*.

Parole chiave: Cosa nostra; Controllo del territorio; Crimine transnazionale; Maxiprocesso; Guerre di mafia, *Scappati*.

REINVENTANDO LA RIVOLUZIONE. LA TRADIZIONE KHOMEINISTA E IL DIBATTITO SULLA DEMOCRAZIA IN IRAN

Paola Rivetti

Over the last thirty years, a constant work of reinvention of its revolutionary tradition has allowed the Islamic Republic of Iran to survive. The porosity of the institutional system and the flexibility of its revolutionary ideology have given way to the emergence of an intellectual debate which has become increasingly concerned about the question of democracy. The historiography is divided on the features of this debate and the reasons which have led to its development. The author argues that the origin of the democratic discourse lies neither in the appropriation of the Western Liberal model; nor in a deviation from the revolutionary ideology, but rather in an original reinterpretation of the latter. The article explores the essence and the contents of the debate, taking into account its potentials and limits.

Key words: Iran; Democracy; Debate; Revolution; Reformism; Reinvention.

Parole chiave: Iran; Democrazia; Dibattito; Rivoluzione; Riformismo; Reinvenzione.

“DIETRO UN MURO DI FERRO”. UN REPORTAGE DAI TERRITORI

Alberto Guasco

This is a reportage of last August's journey into the West Bank, it speaks about the “iron wall” in which, in 1923, Zeew Jabotinsky – father of the right-wing Revisionists-Zionists movement – considered necessary to confine the arabic population.

It speaks of the cities and villages: Aboud, Qalqilya, Taybeh, Ramallah, Bir Zeit, Betlemme, At-Tuwani and Hebron. Of meetings with its people: Michel Sabbah, the patriarch of Jerusalem; priests from Aboud, Taybeh and Gaza; doctors at the Palestinian Melchite Embroidery Center; violinist at Ramallah's music school Al Kamandjati; theologians at the Al-Liqa Center; nuns at the Bethlehem Charitas Baby Hospital, and ordinary families from Bethlehem and Jerusalem.

It pretend only to be a direct encounter with the faces and voices of the Palestinian people.

Key words: West Bank; Wall; Check Point; Jerusalem; Water; Olive Trees.

Parole chiave: West Bank; Muro; Check point; Gerusalemme; Acqua, Ulivi.

L'ETICA E LE DOMANDE DELLO STORICO: BRONISLAW BACZKO

Michel Porret

What meaning has the Enlightenment in the relationship to modernity and progress of the human spirit? This question is the main theme of the historiographic work of Bronislaw Baczko, whose thought is revisited by Michel Porret in the short introductory essay to the article of the polish intellectual. Porret captures the central essence of Baczko's work, in which he recognizes in the century of Voltaire the roots of modern political thought. Through his studies of intellectual, cultural and political history of the eighteenth century, the polish historian renewed the way of interpreting the heritage of the Enlightenment. In fact, he causes a break with the historiographic tradition by emphasizing that the symbolic, philosophical and legal apparatus that the French Revolution of 1789 inherited from the Enlightenment, is the premise to the invention of democracy. Porret highlights Baczko's interpretation of this cultural and political project beginning with Rousseau's criticism of eighteenth century's thought and society. The Genevan philosopher provided cultural, linguistic and political tools to the Revolution, which, in turn, elaborated a new

political language through the dialect between «exercise of power» and «collective imagination». According to Porret, from this «imagination» that intertwines politics and society and represents its power through symbolic spaces such as Panthéon and other monuments, Baczkó conceived the idea of utopia as «mental horizon» that gives meaning to the expectations of the community and which imposes on democracy its continuing institutional reform.

The conclusions of Porret tend to emphasize that the Polish historian is not disenchanted towards the moral responsibilities of those who make history. According to Baczkó, to examine «modern political myths», born with the Enlightenment, means to give meaning to «our democratic culture rooted in our egalitarian imagination» and to the ethical role of the historian.

Key words: The Enlightenment; Rousseau; Revolution; Progress; Modernity; Utopia; Imagination; Democracy.

Parole chiave: Illuminismo; Rousseau; Rivoluzione; Progresso; Modernità; Utopia; Immaginario; Democrazia.

LA RESPONSABILITÀ MORALE DELLO STORICO

Bronislaw Baczkó

Historical knowledge is tied in a thousand ways to the anxieties, conflicts, to antinomies and to the demand of our era. It is in the name of our present that interrogates the past. It possesses a degree of expressive character: voicing the present where one is born and lives. So, therefore, the historian is not an impartial and static observer of the past and the ever-dominant present. He must remain in the perspective of the present-day and the historical moment in which he lives. But «present» is never really finished. One might think that no moral code is consistent with the principle of relativity of knowledge that the researcher is inevitably partial and runs the risk of deformation and ideological sublimation. It may also be that history has taken a far too long function of *magistra vitae* in social awareness. It does not seem to arouse any distrust towards our time. In fact, the disproportion between the anonymous «fate» on one side – the decisions bearing on the existence of humanity and its future destiny – and, on the other hand, the possibility of individual action is today such that history seems pointless for the rationalization of the present. The attitude towards historical knowledge is also influenced by the fact that it is a subject far too easy to exploit and manipulate by power and propaganda, penalizing values often variable and contradictory. The historical-humanist has often been reduced to the role of technical – propagandist. In his research, he cannot make «partial» choices between true and false. The awareness of the relativity of values and of their variability over time, does not change anything in the absolute moral character of historical research. The total moral responsibility of the historian cannot be relieved by anyone. An historian, precisely, must explore the past to get to the truth; he is morally obligated and has no right to falsify.

Key words: Present; Past; Historical Knowledge; «To Be A Historian», Responsibility, Relativism, Moral Code.

Parole chiave: Presente; Passato; Conoscenza storica; «Essere uno storico», Responsabilità, Relativismo, Codice morale.

LA GUERRA DEI MATTI. UNA RICERCA SU UN MANICOMIO DI PROVINCIA

Massimo Tornabene

Beyond the sum of the deaths and of the economic damages caused by war, war accounting has always shown little regard to the mental health traumas caused by these events. And yet many

research studies, based both on the major nineteenth century conflicts and on the more recent ones, show that the psychic traumas provoked by war can persist with their victims often for many decades. My specific research took into consideration the patients of the Neuropsychiatric Hospital of Racconigi, between 1938 and 1974. This mental hospital hosted psychiatric patients from the Cuneo Province during this specific period. More than 2,500 cases have been taken into consideration of which hundreds were soldiers and civilian committed to this hospital after taking part directly in war actions or as victims of war actions, namely soldiers coming back from the Russian military campaign and civilian survivors of the Bove's slaughter.

This research has been possible thanks to the noteworthy helpfulness of the sanitary institution that maintains the medical records of this hospital, including individual case files containing medical documents, public acts and private letters. These historical sources, scarcely used in research, have allowed me to look into the human and cultural atmosphere of the time and to analyze the complexity of the power relations among patients, their relatives, public authorities and medical doctors.

Key words: War; Mental Traumas; Psychiatric Hospital; Medical Records, Soldiers, Civilians.

Parole chiave: Guerra, Traumi mentali, Ospedale psichiatrico; Cartelle cliniche; Soldati.

MATERIALI D'OFFICINA. UN PROGETTO ARCHIVISTICO E STORIOGRAFICO SU UNO SCIOPERO IN UN PAESE DOVE NON SI SCIOPERA

Nelly Valsangiacomo

The FFS Cargo strike in Bellinzona lasted thirty-three days between March and April 2008. It was the point of departure for a project focusing on both present time history and on a shared historical event.

The work consisted in the creation of a specific archive, in the indexing and analysis of audiovisual documents, and in the gathering of direct testimonies. All this allowed the research team to reflect on the methodological aspects linked to the creation of 'real-time archives' and the conservation of data from heterogeneous sources (including the web and sms text message), as well as on the specifics and difficulties inherent to studying the history of the present.

Beyond the analysis of specific local event and, generally speaking, of the new strategies employed during workers' claims and strikes, the project aims at investigating the possibility of keeping a direct contact between protagonists and the building of their 'history'.

Key words: Workers' Movements; Strike; History of the Present Time; Shared Historical Event; Archives, Identity.

Parole chiave: Movimento operaio; Sciopero, Storia del presente; Storia partecipata; Archivi; Identità.

IL ROMANZO (STORICO) COME METAFORA (DEL PRESENTE). CONSIDERAZIONI SU FORMA LETTERARIA E RICERCA STORICA

Giuseppe Panella

The historical novel was born in England in the 1800,s by Sir Walter Scott and was immediately emulated with success in all of Europe, the fundamental idea tha sustained this type of novel was to depict make-believe characters in authentic and verifiable historical contexts. Alessandro Manzoni, the author of one Italy's most significant historical novels, *I Promessi sposi (The Betrothed)*, wrote in one of his literary essays dedicated to the subject (*About historical novels – or, in general, about writings mixed with history and invention*) that he rejected the possibility that there was any artistic

compatibility between narrative invention and historical facts. However after Manzoni's success, many Italian writers followed his footsteps; first and foremost, Ippolito Nievo, with his *Memorie di un Italiano*. After Nievo (and many others considered of lesser importance) surface two important novelists inspired by Manzoni's poetic style. First of all, Riccardo Bacchelli, remembered not only for his gigantic affresco of the story of Italy and Europe *Il Mulino del Po* but also for his shorter stories, *Il Diavolo al Pontelungo* and *Il figlio di Stalin*.

Second but not least, Leonardo Sciascia, the author of many well written historical tales and above all the story inspired by the Sicilian Risorgimento *Il Quarantotto*.

Key words: Historical Novel; Roland Barthes; Alessandro Manzoni; Ippolito Nievo; Riccardo Bacchelli; Leonardo Sciascia.

Parole chiave: Romanzo storico, Roland Barthes; Alessandro Manzoni; Ippolito Nievo; Riccardo Bacchelli; Leonardo Sciascia.