Resisting Memories
Perspectives on Italian National Traumas

Friday, February 18, 2011

2:15-4:15 CICIS Business Meeting, Taper Hall 170

5:00-6:00 Keynote address by Millicent Marcus, Yale University:

In The Ray Stark Family Theatre, Room: SCA 108 USC School of Cinematic Arts
Welcoming Remarks: Professor Margaret Rosenthal, USC, Department of French and
Italian
Introduction of Millicent Marcus: Professor Michael Renov, USC, School of
Cinematic Arts

Ghost Stories: Italian Cinema and Holocaust Memory

My presentation is prompted by the wave of films to emerge from Italy during the last
decade on the topic of Fascist anti-Semitism and the Holocaust. This outpouring of
recent cinematic representations of the Shoah stands in stark contrast to the relative
dearth of such films to be produced throughout the postwar period. In generational
terms, the 90's marked the passage of enough time to have calmed the collective guilt
of a nation that had acquiesced to Mussolini’s racial policies in the late 1930's and 40's.
On the other hand, the rise in Holocaust revisitations might be seen to sound an
alarmist note given the rehabilitation of the Fascist party under the soave management
of Allianza Nazionale’s Gianfranco Fini, and the related rise of right-wing extremist
groups. In addition, the influx of third world immigrants, triggering a knee-jerk reaction of
xenophobia, is causing Italians to reconsider their own past treatment of the other-in-
our-midst. Perhaps the most interesting explanation for the emergence of a
contemporary Holocaust discourse links this development to the end of the Cold War.
The ideological polarization caused by the superpower conflict made for rigid
historiographies of WWII, and the Resistance "master narrative" which monopolized
Italian historical thought left no room for alternative histories that could threaten its
position of dominance. In terms of the Shoah, it was as if the floodgates had been
opened and the belated work of confronting this anguished episode could finally begin.
Within this context, I will look at two recent Italian films, Ricky Tognazzi’s Canone
inverso (2000), and Ettore Scola’s Concorrenza sleale (2001), to see how the traditional
genres of melodrama and commedia all'italiana are transformed by their confrontation
with Holocaust history.

6:15-7:30 Film Screening: "50 Italians: The men who saved 50,000 Jewish
lives" (2009), a feature-length documentary film by Flaminia Lubin.
The Conference will be held in the Fanny Brice Theatre, SCA 110 (the Lobby of the George Lucas Building) in the USC School of Cinematic Arts Complex.

**9:15-10:45** Moderator: Jon Snyder, UCSB

- Claudio Fogu, UCSB, *Politics of Memory or Poetics of History?*
- Regina Longo, UCSB, *Archival Interstices: Fragmentary Migrations and Sites of Reconstruction*
- Lenore Kitts, UC Berkeley, *Crisis at Sant’Anna di Stazzema: Italy’s New Narrative about the Crimes of World War II*
- Cristina Villa, USC, *The Shoah in Italy and the Myth of the Good Italian*

**10:45-11:15** Coffee Break

**11:15-12:30** Moderator: Alessio Filippi, USC

- Lucia Re, UCLA, *Muslim in Rome: The Novels of Amara Lakhous*
- Cristina Lombardi-Diop, American University of Rome-UC Berkeley, *Post-racial Italy: Whiteness, Hygiene, and the Memory of Race*
- Aíne O’Healy, Loyola Marymount University, *The Trauma of Postcolonial (Im)mobility in Italy’s Cinema of Migration*
- Marina Romani, UC Berkeley, *Inside/Outside the Academic Discourse: Antonio Pennacchi’s “Fascio e Martello.” Viaggio per le Citta’ del Duce*

**12:30-2:00** Lunch

**2:00-3:30** Moderator: Caterina Crisci, USC

- Chiara Ferrari, CSU Chico, *Something is Rotten in the State of Italy: Political Terrorism and Ideological Omerta’ in Contemporary Italian Cinema*
- Andrea Bini, UCLA, *‘Teatro di Narrazione’ and Trauma: Vajont*
- Alessia Nannì Weisberg, UCLA, *Between Collective History and Personal Experience: the Memoirs of Ex-Red Brigades and the Whisper of the Victims*
- Rossella Carbotti, UC Berkeley, *Questioning “those who were there:” The Memory and Myth of 1968 in Italy*

**3:30-3:45** Coffee Break

**3:45-4:45** Moderator: Francesca Leardini, USC

- Albert Russell Ascoli, UC Berkeley, *The Italian Crisis in the First Furioso*
- Marco Prina, UC Berkeley, *Reassessing Communal Foundational Myths in the Middle Ages: The Case of Dante’s Cacciaguida Episode*
- Clorinda Donato, CSU Long Beach, *The Granducato in Ruins: Private and Collective Trauma in Giangastone de’ Medici’s Tuscany and Current Reenactments*

**Closing Remarks:** Claudio Fogu, University of California at Santa Barbara

**Moderator:** Clorinda Donato, CSU Long Beach:  
"Round Table Discussion of the State of the Profession: Professional, Institutional and Academic Trends in Italian Studies."