

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CONTEMPORARY ITALIAN CULTURE

Edited by Gino Moliterno



**Also available as a printed book
see title verso for ISBN details**

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London and New York

First published 2000 by Routledge 11 New Fetter Lane, London EC4P 4EE

Simultaneously published in the USA and Canada by Routledge 29 West 35th Street, New York,
NY 10001

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group

This edition published in the Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2005.

“To purchase your own copy of this or any of Taylor & Francis or Routledge's collection of
thousands of eBooks please go to www.eBookstore.tandf.co.uk.”

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data A catalogue record for this book is available from
the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data Encyclopedia of contemporary Italian
culture/edited by Gino Moliterno p. cm. Includes bibliographical references and index. 1. Italy—
Civilization—20th century—Encyclopedias. I. Moliterno, Gino, 1951–. DG450.E53 2000
945.09'03—dc21 99–38356 CIP

ISBN 0-203-44025-0 Master e-book ISBN

ISBN 0-203-74849-2 (Adobe e-Reader Format)
ISBN 0-415-14584-8

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The entries by Paolo Puppa and Achille Serrau were translated by Gino Moliterno

Introduction

In the half century following the end of the Second World War Italy has been profoundly transformed from a predominantly rural and relatively provincial culture into a bustling, post-industrial, metropolitan society. This dramatic passage from almost pre-industrial to decisively postmodern in the space of only 50 years has been neither linear nor univocal and has not been achieved without costs. In fact, it would be no exaggeration to suggest that the keyword for this entire period has been the word 'crisis'. Nevertheless, at the end of the twentieth century the Italian success story goes on. A distinctive Italian style of design, fashion and cuisine continues to exert a strong influence in the international marketplace with the 'made in Italy' label remaining a mark of quality and prestige. In 1997 Italian actor-playwright Dario Fo won the Nobel prize for literature, and in 1999 Roberto Benigni's *La vita è bella* (Life is Beautiful) took the Oscar for Best Foreign Film, the third time an Italian film has done so in the last decade. More importantly, perhaps, as we enter the twenty-first century, the Italian lira has been allowed to join the common European currency and Italy has also been able to play a full participatory role in NATO's intervention in the Kosovo war and other United Nations peacekeeping missions throughout the world.

At the same time, at a more academic level, there has also been a broadening of perspectives in the teaching of Italian Studies in the English-speaking world, with the focus now frequently moving beyond the traditional areas of literature, music and the fine arts to embrace many aspects of Italian life and culture previously ignored. Italian language courses, both at school and university, have also extended their scope beyond the confines of grammar in order to attempt to teach the language more effectively within its wider social and cultural contexts. At the same time, as Italy has come to be more closely integrated into the European Union, Italian politics and society have also been included in the curricula of courses on European Studies. This greater and more diversified interest in contemporary Italy has underlined the need for a comprehensive reference work in English which could offer accurate, concise and up-to-date information on a wide range of topics in a readily-accessible format. Routledge's *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Italian Culture* is an attempt to address that need.

In seeking to cater for both academic and more general readers we have interpreted the term 'contemporary Italian culture' in the broadest sense. We have assumed 'contemporary' to mean post-1945 since it was only with the founding of the First Republic at the end of the Second World War that Italy really embarked on its dramatic passage to modernity. Our historical reference, then, has been the postwar period. Nevertheless, it's clear that many aspects of Italian life and culture in the period following the War cannot be satisfactorily understood without at least some reference to earlier times, so reference to the prewar period has not been excluded where it could facilitate a better understanding of the topic at hand. 'Italy' and 'Italian' have been interpreted in a commonsense fashion to mean localized within the national borders. A

certain amount of coverage of Italian culture outside the peninsula has also been provided in such entries as 'migration', 'literature of migration', 'Italian outside Italy' (referring to the language) and 'Italian-American Cinema', but limitations of space have prevented the inclusion of separate entries on all the 'little Italics' abroad, a task that would have required a volume on its own.

Although there has been much animated debate of late over the very notion of culture, in particular of 'culture' understood as a unitary phenomenon, we have avoided the temptation to become involved in a theoretical debate which is probably better conducted in the pages of more specialized journals. Here we have taken the opportunity offered by the Routledge series to interpret 'culture' in the very broadest sense as covering all social activities and institutions and all communicative and symbolic practices which might be considered as forming part of a distinctively Italian 'way of life'. The reader will thus find entries on all aspects of Italian postwar life, society and culture, ranging from food and religion to spas and sport. While not neglecting the traditional areas of 'high' culture this volume has also striven to present the more significant manifestations of Italian popular culture in the postwar period, by including entries on topics such as comics, *fotoromanzi*, detective fiction, pop music, and, of course, television. As Umberto Eco has noted, one of the most significant cultural achievements in the postwar period, namely the use of a standard Italian language throughout the peninsula, was finally brought about neither through literature nor the efforts of intellectuals but quite effortlessly by television. It is indeed significant that Italy is the only country in the world where a television magnate controlling three national networks has been elected, even if only briefly, to the office of Prime Minister, and our attention to television and television programmes in this volume attempts to pay due respect to this influence.

With over 900 entries covering every aspect of life and culture in the Italian First Republic, this encyclopedia seeks to offer both the academic and the more general reader the most extensive store-house of information on contemporary Italy available in English today. The entries, ranging from short concise sketches of about two hundred words to the more substantial overview articles of around two thousand words, all attempt to present their factual information in a contextualized way so as to bring out the cultural relevance of each topic. Although each entry has been written to stand alone in order to facilitate quick consultation, internal cross-referencing is used extensively to help the reader make useful connections by turning to related topics. Wherever possible, entries also contain suggestions for further reading, usually annotated so as to guide the reader interested in pursuing further research to the most appropriate material. With an eye to serving readers who may not know Italian, an attempt has been made to refer to material in English but important texts in Italian have also been included where this seemed appropriate.

Having been created with the aim of meeting the needs of both the more specialized and the general reader, this Encyclopedia thus hopes to function both as an essential resource for teaching and learning as well as a valuable aid to further research.

Acknowledgements

The publication of this volume owes much to the willing collaboration of many individuals whose generous contribution I would like to acknowledge here.

My thanks go first to Professor Guido Almansi, Professor Luigi Bonaffini and Dr Jonathan White who offered valuable advice in the early stages of the project even if other commitments prevented them from contributing further to the volume.

A vote of thanks is due, of course, to all the writers but especially to Dr Stefano Battilossi, Dr Mark Donovan, Dr John Kersey and Fassil Zewdou who all willingly took on extra entries as the need arose. Professor Peter Bondanella and Professor Ben Lawton contributed more than is apparent on the surface and I express my gratitude to them. The consulting editors have all been invaluable in providing expert advice and helping to draw up the entry list but Dr Camilla Bettoni deserves special thanks for her meticulous organization and editing of all the language entries. A special vote of thanks, too, to Dr Max Staples and Professor Andrea Ciccarelli for always being available to answer my queries as well as taking on more entries as the need for them became apparent. Above all I would like to thank Professor David Moss who for the past three years has generously shared his remarkable expertise in all things Italian with me and, with warmth and enthusiasm, has continually offered encouragement.

I thank the Australian National University for facilitating this project through the award of a research grant and a period of study leave. I would also like to warmly thank Professor Iain McCalman and the entire staff of the ANU Humanities Research Centre for their hospitality during my three months at the Centre as a Visiting Fellow.

Thanks also to Lucio Cavicchioli and Vivien Rubessa for their help in researching particular entries and to Patricia Werlemann and Alessandro Moliterno for their general support, especially in times of great difficulty.

Finally I would like to extend my warmest thanks to Professor Carol Sanders for having originally encouraged me to undertake the project and to Fiona Cairns, Denise Rea and all the Routledge staff who have consistently offered the most valuable editorial support and advice.

Gino Moliterno Canberra, July 1999

How to use this book

The *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Italian Culture* contains over 900 signed entries, arranged alphabetically and ranging from concise thumbnail sketches to longer overview essays.

For readers with a particular interest, a thematic contents list on p. xiv groups entries according to subject (e.g. music or the visual arts). In the body of each entry direct cross-references, indicated in bold type, lead to other relevant articles in the volume. Where appropriate a 'see also' section at the end of an entry will indicate further related topics.

Biographical entries include dates and places of birth and death, followed by the profession of the subject. Wherever available, the exact day, month and year have been given. For the benefit of English speakers place-names have generally been anglicized.

Suggestions for further reading are given where appropriate and where relevant texts are easily accessible. All titles of books, plays and films are given both in their original and in English translation.

Thematic entry list

Architecture and design

Abitare

Albini, Franco
anti-design
architectural and design magazines

L'Architettura

Archizoom
Aulenti, Gae
Aymonino, Carlo
Bellini, Mario
Benevolo, Leonardo
BPR
Branzi, Andrea
Canella, Guido
Casabella
Castiglioni, Achille
Castiglioni, Pier Giacomo
Civiltà delle macchine
Colombo, Joe
Controspazio
De Carlo, Giancarlo
design education

Domus

Figini and Pollini
Gabetti and Isola
Gardella, Ignazio
Giacosa, Dante
Grassi, Giorgio
Gregotti, Vittorio
industrial design
interior design
IUAV
Libera, Adalberto
Magistretti, Vico
Mari, Enzo

Mendini, Alessandro
Michelucci, Giovanni
Milan Triennale
Modo
Mollino, Carlo
Moretti, Luigi Walter
Munari, Bruno
Muratori, Saverio
Natalini, Adolfo
Nervi, Pier Luigi
Piano, Renzo
Piccinato, Luigi
Ponti, Giò
Porcinai, Pietro
Portoghesi, Paolo
Purini, Franco
Quaroni, Ludovico
Ridolfi, Mario
Rogers, Ernesto N.
Rosselli, Alberto
Rossi, Aldo
Samonà, Giuseppe
Scarpa and Scarpa
Scarpa, Carlo
Sottsass, Ettore
Spazio e società
Stile Industria
Studio Alchimia
Studio Memphis
Superstudio
Tafuri, Manfredo
Thermes, Laura
urban planning
Valle, Gino
Venezia, Francesco
Viganò, Vittoriano
Zanuso, Marco
Zanussi
Zevi, Bruno

Cultural institutions/phenomena

arts festivals

- Dante Alighieri Society
- Istituti italiani di cultura
- music festivals
- music institutions
- Spoletto Festival
- tourism
- Venice Biennale

Economy

Agnelli family

- agriculture
- Alitalia
- Banca Commerciale Italiana
- Banca d'Italia
- banking and credit system
- Carli, Guido
- Cassa per il Mezzogiorno
- Cefis, Eugenio
- Ciampi, Carlo Azeglio
- co-operatives
- Confindustria
- Cuccia, Enrico
- De Benedetti, Carlo
- economic miracle
- economy
- ENEL
- ENI
- Ferrari, Enzo Anselmo
- Ferruzzi
- Fiat
- Fininvest
- Finsider
- Gemina
- Ilva
- industry

INPS
IRI
Italsider
Mattei, Enrico
Mediobanca
Menichella, Donato
Modigliani, Franco
Montedison
motor car industry
Olivetti
peasants
Pirelli
privatization/nationalization
Romiti, Cesare
STET
taxation
Third Italy
tourism
trade unions
unemployment
Vanoni, Ezio

Education and research

ASI
CENSIS
Consiglio Nazionale di Ricerche
education
ISTAT
Levi Montalcini, Rita
Rubbia, Carlo
universities

Fashion

Armani, Giorgio
Benetton
Biagiotti, Laura
Brioni
Capucci, Roberto

Dolce and Gabbana
fashion
Fendi, Paola
Ferragamo, Salvatore
Ferrè, Gianfranco
Fiorucci, Elio
Fontana
Gigli
Gucci
Krizia
Marzotto
MaxMara
Missoni
Moschino
Prada
Pucci, Emilio
Trussardi
Valentino
Versace

Film

Age and Scarpelli
Amelio, Gianni
Antonioni, Michelangelo
Archibugi, Francesca
Argento, Dario
Avati, Giuseppe (Pupi)
Bellocchio, Marco
Bertolucci, Bernardo
Bertolucci, Giuseppe
Blasetti, Alessandro
Bolognini, Mauro
Brass, Tinto (Giovanni)
Brusati, Franco
Camerini, Mario
Cardinale, Claudia
Castellani, Renato
Cavani, Liliana
Cecchi D'Amico, Suso
Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia
Chiarini, Luigi
Cinecittà

cinematographers
Comencini, Cristina
Comencini, Luigi
Cottafavi, Vittorio
Damiani, Damiano
De Santis, Giuseppe
De Santis, Pasqualino
De Seta, Vittorio
De Sica, Vittorio
Del Monte, Peter
Delli Colli, Tonino
Dolci, Danilo
Fellini, Federico
feminist cinema
Ferrerri, Marco
film actors
film composers
film industry
film journals
Germi, Pietro
Infascelli, Fiorella
Istituto Nazionale LUCE
Italian-American Cinema
Lattuada, Alberto
Leone, Sergio
Lizzani, Carlo
Loren, Sophia
Loy, Nanni
Luchetti, Daniele
Magnani, Anna
Manfredi, Nino
Mangano, Silvana
Martone, Mario
Masina, Giulietta
Mastroianni, Marcello
Mazzacurati, Carlo
Montaldo, Giuliano
Monti, Adriana
Moretti, Nanni
Morricone, Ennio
neorealism
New Italian cinema
Nichetti, Maurizio
Olmi, Ermanno
Pasolini, Pier Paolo
Petri, Elio

Pontecorvo, Gillo
Risi, Dino
Risi, Marco
Rossellini, Roberto
Rota, Nino
Rotunno, Giuseppe
Rubini, Sergio
Salvatores, Gabriele
Sandrelli, Stefania
Scola, Ettore
Soldini, Silvio
Sordi, Alberto
Storaro, Vittorio
Taviani, Paolo and Vittorio
Tognazzi, Ricki
Tognazzi, Ugo
Tornatore, Giuseppe
Torrini, Cinzia
Totò
Troisi, Massimo
Valli, Alida
Vanzina family
Verdone, Carlo
Visconti, Luchino
Vitti, Monica
Volonté, Gian Maria
Wertmüller, Lina
Zampa, Luigi
Zeffirelli, Franco

Food and drink

bread
cheeses
coffee
olive oil
pasta
pizza
polenta
prosciutto
regional cooking
tartufo
tavola calda

wine

History

anti-fascism
emigration
environmental movement
European Union
Falcone, Giovanni
fascism/neofascism
foreign policy
feminism
gay movement
Giuliano, Salvatore
Gladio
historiography
immigration
Mani pulite
opening to the Left
postwar reconstruction
Resistance
strategia della tensione
student movement
Trieste

Intellectual life

Abbagnano, Nicola
Agamben, Giorgio
Alberoni, Francesco
alfabeta
Anceschi, Luciano
Asor Rosa, Alberto
Aut aut
Banfi, Antonio
Bobbio, Norberto
Cacciari, Massimo
Colletti, Lucio
Colli, Giorgio
Groce, Benedetto

De Felice, Renzo
De Martino, Ernesto
Della Volpe, Galvano
Eco, Umberto
Garin, Eugenio
Geymonat, Ludovico
Ginzburg, Carlo
Gramsci, Antonio
Gruppo 63
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Momigliano, Arnaldo
Paci, Enzo
Pareyson, Luigi
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Severino, Emanuele
Vattimo, Gianni
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Italian and emigration
Italian language
Italian lexicon
Italian morphology
Italian outside Italy
Italian phonology
Italian syntax
language attitudes
language education
language institutions
language policy
minority languages
sectorial languages
sexism in language
varieties of Italian

Literature and criticism

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Asor Rosa, Alberto
Barilli, Renato
Bo, Carlo
Branca, Vittore
Cecchi, Emilio
Ceserani, Remo
Contini, Gianfranco
Corti, Maria
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Debenedetti, Giacomo
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Dionisotti, Carlo
Ferroni, Giulio
Fortini, Franco
Fubini, Mario
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immigrant literature
literary journals
literary prizes
literature of emigration
il menabò
narrative
Ossola, Carlo
poetry
Raimondi, Ezio
Sapegno, Natalino
Segre, Cesare
women's writing

Mass media and publishing

Adelphi
advertising
l'altra domenica
Ansa
Arbore, Renzo
Auditel
Baudo, Giuseppe (Pippo)
Berlusconi, Silvio

Bernabei, Ettore
Biagi, Enzo
Bocca, Giorgio
Bongiorno, Mike
broadcasting
Canale Cinque
Carrà, Raffaella
comics
Il Corriere della sera
Costanzo, Maurizio
Cuore
Einaudi
Epoca
L'Espresso
L'Europeo
Famiglia Cristiana
Feltrinelli
fotoromanzi
Il Giorno
Grand Hotel
L'Indice dei libri del mese
information agencies
Italia Uno
Legge Mammi
Liberal
Il Male
Marsilio
Mondadori
Il Mondo
Montanelli, Indro
Il Mulino
Mursia
La Nazione
newspapers
L'Osservatore Romano
Panorama
Il Politecnico
private television
publishers
quaderni piacentini
Quaderni Rossi
Quelli della notte
radio
Radio Alice
RAI
La Repubblica

Il Resto del Carlino
Rete Quattro
Ricci, Franco Maria
Rinascita
Santoro, Michele
Scalfari, Eugenio
scholarly publishers
sports broadcasting
sports publications
La Stampa
Tango
Telemontecarlo
Telenovelas
television talk shows
Toscani, Oliviero
L'Unità
Vespa, Bruno
Videomusic

Music

Abbado, Claudio
Antonacci, Annamaria
Area, Paolo
Bartoli, Cecilia
Battisti, Lucio
Benedetti Michelangeli, Arturo
Berio, Luciano
Bocelli, Andrea
Bussotti, Sylvano
cantautori
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Celentano, Adriano
Clementi, Aldo
Dalla, Lucio
Dallapiccola, Luigi
Donatoni, Franco
Ferrero, Lorenzo
Gaber, Giorgio
Jannacci, Enzo
Lanza, Mario
Maderna, Bruno
Menotti, Gian Carlo

Milva
Mina
Modugno, Domenico
Morandi, Gianni
music festivals
music institutions
Muti, Riccardo
Nannini, Gianna
Nono, Luigi
Nuova compagnia di Canto Popolare
opera
Pavarotti, Luciano
Petrassi, Goffredo
Pietrangeli, Paolo
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Ranieri, Massimo
rap music
Ricciarelli, Katia
Sanremo Festival
La Scala
Scelsi, Giacinto
Sciarrino, Salvatore
Solbiati, Alessandro
Villa, Claudio
Zuccherò

Performing arts

Albertazzi, Giorgio
avant-garde theatre
Barba, Eugenio
Bene, Carmelo
Benigni, Roberto
Betti, Ugo
cantautori
Castri, Massimo
Cecchi, Carlo
La Comune
Convegno per un Nuovo Teatro
De Berardinis, Leo
De Filippo, Eduardo
Fabbri, Diego
Fo, Dario

Fracci, Carla
Grillo, Beppe
Magazzini Criminali
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Poli, Paolo
Rame, Franca
Ronconi, Luca
Scaparro, Maurizio
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Villaggio, Paolo

Politics

Amato, Giuliano
Amendola, Giorgio
Andreotti, Giulio
autonomia
Berlinguer, Enrico
Berlusconi, Silvio
Bonino, Emma
Bossi, Umberto
CCD
CDU
Codice Rocco
Constituent Assembly
constitution
Constitutional Court
Cossiga, Francesco
Council of Ministers
Craxi, Bettino
Curcio, Renato
D'Alema, Massimo
Dalla Chiesa, General Carlo Alberto
DC
De Gasperi, Alcide
De Martino, Francesco

De Mita, Ciriaco
Democrazia proletaria
Di Pietro, Antonio
Dini, Lamberto
Dorotei
Dossetti, Giuseppe
electoral systems
Evola, Julius
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Fanfani, Amintore
Festa dell'Unità
Fini, Gianfranco
Forlani, Arnaldo
Forza Italia
Gramsci, Antonio
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Ingrao, Pietro
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Jotti, Nilde
Lega Nord
legal system
Longo, Luigi
Il manifesto
Martinazzoli, Mimo
MLD
monarchists
Moro, Aldo
Movimento di Comunità
MSI
Napolitano, Giorgio
National Alliance
Nenni, Pietro
Occhetto, Achille
Pajetta, Giancarlo
Pannella, Marco
Parliament
Partito d'Azione
PCI
PDS
pentiti
Pertini, Alessandro
Piazza Fontana
PLI
political parties
Polo della Libertà
PPI

President of the Council of Ministers
President of the Republic
PRI
Prodi, Romano
PSDI
PSI
PSIUP
Radical Party
Red Brigades
referenda
regional government
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Santucci, Luigi
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Sciascia, Leonardo
Sereni, Vittorio
Sgorlon, Carlo
Siciliano, Enzo
Silone, Ignazio
Sinisgalli, Leonardo
Soldati, Mario
Solmi, Renato
Solmi, Sergio
Spatola, Adriano
Spaziani, Maria Luisa
Tabucchi, Antonio
Tamaro, Susanna
Terra, Stefano
Testori, Giovanni
Tobino, Mario
Tomizza, Fulvio
Tondelli, Pier Vittorio
Ungaretti, Giuseppe
Vacca, Roberto

Valduga, Patrizia
Valesio, Paolo ug
Vassalli, Sebastiano
Vittorini, Elio
Volponi, Paolo
Zanzotto, Andrea

A

Abbado, Claudio

b. 26 June 1933, Milan

Conductor

Born into a musical family, Abbado began to study piano with his father. After further piano studies at the Milan Conservatoire he turned to conducting, becoming a student of Swarowsky in Vienna and winning the Koussevitsky Prize in 1958. He won the Mitropoulos Prize in 1963, and the consequent engagements with the New York Philharmonic launched his international career. In 1969 he was appointed conductor at **La Scala**, becoming its musical director from 1971–80. His period of office saw a notable broadening of the repertoire and lifting of standards. He served as principal conductor of the Vienna Philharmonic from 1971, and of the London Symphony Orchestra from 1979–88. In 1986 he was appointed director of the Vienna State Opera, and in 1989 succeeded Karajan at the Berlin Philharmonic. Abbado's conducting is distinguished by his attention to detail and his robust rhythmic grasp. His repertoire is impressively wide, with particular strengths in the Germanic and Italian twentieth-century traditions.

JOHN KERSEY

Abbagnano, Nicola

b. 15 July 1901, Salerno; d. 9 September 1990, Milan

Philosopher

Nicola Abbagnano was Italy's first existentialist philosopher. His early works (from the 1920s) opposed the idealism of **Croce** and Gentile by arguing that thought was not as central to the life of the mind as the will, meaningful action and the immediate experience of life itself. In 1939 he published *La struttura dell'esistenza* (The Structure of Existence), which Enzo **Paci** recognized as the work that would define Italian existentialism and put Abbagnano in the league of Heidegger and Jaspers. Abbagnano

subsequently differentiated his philosophy from both ontological and theistic existentialisms by insisting that possibility should neither be doomed to failure, nor guaranteed by Being (identified with God). Abbagnano taught from 1936 to 1976 at the University of Turin, where his students included Umberto **Eco** and Gianni **Vattimo**, and he is also well-known for his reference books on the history of philosophy.

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THOMAS KELSO

Abitare

A Milan-based, fully-bilingual, international monthly magazine for contemporary architecture, design, art and interior decoration, *Abitare* first appeared in 1960. Its editorial policy has been to 'present the latest projects and trends through indepth articles on industrial and graphic design, furniture and artifact production around the world'. Although it concentrates on craft design and traditionally devotes much space to product advertising, it also incorporates a genuine intersection of the 'home, town and environment living' as well as certain exclusively architectural themes, especially in its monographic presentations of architects and particular projects and trends. *Abitare* played an important role in making the sumptuousness of Italian neo-modern interiors known internationally. It targets not only those professionally and commercially interested in design issues, but also a larger, informed readership concerned with all aspects of the quality of the living environment. The magazine was acquired by Milan's Segesta Publishing group in 1976 and has most recently been edited by Maria Giulia Zunino.

See also: architectural and design magazines

GORDANA KOSTICH

abortion

The campaign for abortion during the 1970s was the single issue which united the many and varied strands of feminist opinion in Italy, turning Italian **feminism** into a mass movement which mobilized on a national scale. The huge pro-abortion rallies of the mid-1970s, attended by hundreds of thousands of women, marked feminism as a significant radical force which cut across traditional class and political lines. While the misery of

clandestine abortion was more endured by the poor who could not afford to travel abroad, the politicization of women's real experience, at such variance from the powerful ideologies promulgated by both church and state, revealed the gulf between rhetoric and reality in the lives of all Italian women.

Under Italian law, clandestine abortion—usually the only available form of birth control—was punishable by up to five years' imprisonment. Campaigning for abortion was initiated in the early 1970s by the **MLD**, the Movement for Liberation of Woman, affiliated with the **Radical Party** which, with its loose structure, was able to accommodate pressure group and single-issue politics. The 500,000 signatures needed to initiate a referendum under the Italian constitution was well exceeded, and the collection of signatures was accompanied by a campaign of civil disobedience which recalled the direct action of the 1960s. Information networks on safe abortion procedures were set up, and women organized clandestine abortions which they then defiantly announced in public; many women 'confessed' to having had an abortion themselves. Indeed, surveys suggested that almost all Italian women had either had an abortion themselves or knew of someone who had. No party could thus continue to ignore the issue now forced onto the political agenda.

However, despite women's public demonstration of support, the bill which was finally put before **Parliament** in 1978 (Law 194) was severely compromised by right-wing interests and the failure of the Left to fully embrace women's issues. While abortion within ninety days of conception now became legal, there were numerous clauses limiting the woman's right to choose: a doctor had to confirm that continued pregnancy would be prejudicial to a woman's physical or psychological health; women under the age of eighteen were required to seek parental permission; a seven-day 'reflection' period was established; and abortions could take place only in authorized medical establishments in which medical staff could refuse to carry out abortions on the grounds of conscience. The latter clause in particular caused much bitterness, with some observers suspecting collusion and shared vested interests between the medical establishment and the state. Some areas of the South registered up to a 90 per cent conscientious objection rate, making abortion within the legislated time limits extremely difficult. Many were left disappointed, and women still faced numerous difficulties in seeking an abortion. One practical consequence of this weakness of the law was the setting up of women-only clinics by female health practitioners.

In 1980 there were 220,000 abortions, though the figure had dropped to just over 160,000 in 1990. The most likely causes of this decline were improved contraception facilities, more readily available information on women's health and, possibly, a response to the spread of **HIV/AIDS**. The biggest decrease in recourse to abortion was registered in the North, where one-parent families and children born outside marriage were possibly more socially acceptable than in other parts of the country. A dual referendum in 1981 seeking on the one hand to overturn, and on the other hand considerably to widen, the legislation was defeated and, despite attacks from the Right to undermine it, Law 194 remains on the statute books.

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SHARON WOOD

Accardi, Carla

b. 19 October 1924, Trapani, Sicily

Artist

Carla Accardi was a central figure in the development of Italian abstraction. In 1947 she was a founding member of *Forma* (Form), a group which announced itself to be both formalist in art and Marxist in politics. She thus distanced herself from the social realism approved by the Communist Party (**PCI**), believing it was possible to produce abstract art and still support the cause of class struggle. Her style at this time was a dynamic, French-influenced neo-cubism. From 1961 Accardi was a member of the **Continuità** (Continuity) group. She experimented with the optical effects of colours, and produced works on transparent plastic. *Stella*, a work from the 1960s, wittily shows her knowledge of the American abstractionist Frank Stella. Later works, while still abstract, are decorative and suggest organic forms. In 1964 and 1988, Accardi was chosen to represent Italy at **Venice Biennale** and in 1997 she was honoured by the Italian State with the title of 'cavaliere' (knight).

MAX STAPLES

Adami, Valerio

b. 17 March 1935, Bologna

Artist

Adami's early work was abstract, but a gradual drift from abstraction to more formal figuration began to occur in the late 1960s. In his paintings of this period, the often ironical use of a dislocated imagery displays pop art influences and affinities with the work of Emilio **Tadini**. Adami also examined the relationship between the photographic and the painted image. His compositions of public spaces like swimming pools and waiting rooms painted from photographs he had himself taken conveyed a strong sense of suspense and immobilization. He maintained a consistent style of strong uniform colours, black outlines and shattered perspectives. Fragments of written text figure significantly in Adami's later work, which draws heavily upon literary and mythological subject matter. Adami has mostly lived in Paris. His work has been the subject of an important essay by French post-structuralist philosopher, Jacques Derrida.

LAURENCE SIMMONS

Adelphi

One of Italy's most prestigious publishing houses, Adelphi was founded in 1962 by Roberto Bazlen and Luciano Foà. They was soon joined by Roberto **Calasso** who became, and thereafter remained, Adelphi's managing editor and major driving force. Adopting a Chinese pictogram of the dance of life and death as its emblem and light pastel colours for its simple but elegant cover designs, Adelphi sought to promote an ideal of literary culture as spiritual enlightenment. Some of its most successful titles have been, in fact, the orientalising novels of Herman Hesse and other spiritual manuals such as Pirsis's *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*. This taste for arcane and sometimes obscure gnostic texts has always attracted criticism from some quarters, but Adelphi has undoubtedly also been responsible for introducing Italians to important Central European writers like Joseph Roth, Karl Kraus and Milan Kundera, amongst others. During the 1980s it reissued the work of Italian idealist philosopher Benedetto **Croce** as well as continuing to promote fine Italian novelists such as Anna Maria **Ortese**, Leonardo **Sciascia** and Calasso himself. Arguably, one of Adelphi's most significant cultural contribution has been its publication of a critical edition of the complete works of Nietzsche, under the scholarly editorship of Giorgio **Colli** and Mazzino Montinari.

GINO MOLITERNO

advertising

In Italy, as in many other Western countries, advertising has privileged different media in different periods. While posters, press, cinema and radio were the dominant media in the immediate postwar era, from the 1950s onwards television became the most preferred medium for advertisers. Two other aspects of advertising in Italy are especially notable:

the role of the artistic avantgarde (especially futurism) in advertising posters and the peculiar relationship between cinema and television.

Avantgarde

A number of artists (mainly painters and graphic designers, but also writers and poets) contributed to the birth of advertising in Italy, creating a marriage between advertising and art. This became rarer in later years when advertising came to be viewed with suspicion, especially by *intellectuals* and the educated class, but its original role was nevertheless significant.

In order to understand the situation in the postwar period, it is necessary to go back to the years between 1910 and 1930, when avantgarde movements like dadaism, surrealism and futurism were flourishing. The latter in particular merged high and low culture, by expanding the scope of aesthetics to include aspects of everyday life like technology and machines. Advertising was thus seen as a form of popular culture which could bring aesthetic principles to a large public. The merger between art and advertising proceeded along two main paths: advertising became a common 'quotation' in painting, and painters became creators of advertisements. A visual or a verbal style was established, based on the creative principle of *parole in libertà* (free-floating words), a free and expressive use of language and lettering. Some of the most important artists of that period such as S.Pozzati (Sepo), M.Nizzoli, G.Boccasile and F.Seneca invented brand images that in some cases are still in existence (for example, Seneca's trade mark for the Italian petrol industry Agip).

The merging of art and advertising also included verbal aspects: authors and poets were involved in the creation of brand names and slogans (the oldest and most famous was D'Annunzio's invention of the name for the first Italian department store, La Rinascente). This avantgarde influence continued throughout the 1930s with futurist artists like Depero and Marinetti writing catchy slogans for Campari and other Italian brands, and well into the 1950s and 1960s when writers such as **Soldati**, Tofano and M.Marchesi invented long-lasting slogans for television advertising.

Carosello

The entry of advertising into Italian television in 1957 was very restrained, due to the rather paternalistic attitude of the **RAI's** single national channel of the time. The management was mostly made up of intellectuals (**Eco** and **Vattimo** were among the youngest) who were very wary of introducing commercials into a state channel whose main function was pedagogical (and for which the public was paying licence fees). The

result was a strictly regimented programme: SACIS, a committee from the RAI in charge of gathering and controlling advertising and the Ministero delle Poste (Ministry for Post), under whose jurisdiction the RAI fell, drew up an agreement according to which advertising could only be broadcast if it conformed to a suitable format and quality which could ensure that the rest of the RAI's programmes would not fall into disrepute. Thus *Carosello* was born.

Broadcast daily from 3 February 1957 to 1 January 1977, *Carosello* (Carousel) was a fifteen-minute nightly segment composed of commercial messages of two minutes and fifteen seconds each. The rules dictated that no product could be seen, mentioned or alluded to during the first one minute and forty seconds of the film. During this time a 'show' had to be offered to the viewers, a story based on creative and original ideas and produced according to the style and principles of mainstream broadcasting. Only during the last thirty seconds (called a *codino* or 'little tail') was it possible to introduce the product, and the attempts to justify its presence led to a series of puns and nonsense that came to characterize the language of advertising at the time. The fact that advertising had to enter households in the most unnoticeable and 'delicate' way was a sign of the anti-industrial and anti-modern bias of a very traditional society. Moreover, the ads were quite expensive for the firms to produce since each story could be repeated only twice and during *Carosello*'s twenty years some 30,000 different stories were broadcast.

Well-known theatre and cinema actors, amongst them Nino **Manfredi**, Ugo **Tognazzi**, Alberto **Sordi**, Eduardo **De Filippo**, and radio and television personalities such as Mike **Bongiorno** and Renzo **Arbore** starred in *Carosello*'s short stories, many of which were directed by famous film-makers like **Fellini**, **Leone**, **Olmi** and the **Taviani brothers**. However the most popular and long-lived heroes of Italian commercials were probably cartoon characters and animated puppets like Calimero and Pippo the Hippopotamus.

Significantly, *Carosello* was shot in **Cinecittà**, at the heart of Italian film industry in Rome, whilst the main advertising agencies (which with only a few exceptions were all branches of American and British firms) were in Milan. Consequently, while the main agencies were applying marketing strategies and motivational research, *Carosello*'s creative staff were left to their own imagination, and were thus able to produce ideas and witty exchanges closer to the improvisational techniques of *Commedia dell'arte* than to modern advertising. Many phrases thus coined for *Carosello* became so popular as to pass into the everyday language of Italian viewers.

The four or five short stories which made up the programme were always framed by a series of drop-scenes. From the 1960s onwards, they depicted four famous Italian squares in Venice, Siena, Naples and Rome, drawn by the painter Manfredi, (another demonstration of the tradition of 'marriage' between art and advertising that characterized the postwar period) whilst the sound-track consisted of an arrangement of an old *tarantella*, a jingle that has remained part of Italian television history.

Various defined as a fascinating aberration of Italian television advertising, the best product of Italian cinema, as French film-maker Jean-Luc Godard once remarked, or as the most original contribution offered by Italy to the history of television (by *Le Figaro*, commenting on the end of the programme in 1997), *Carosello* was certainly the most characteristic expression of advertising made in Italy. Becoming virtually synonymous with publicity itself, it contributed to setting the evening ritual of most of the Italian viewers. Coming after the news, it marked the beginning of the 'light' part of the

evening's viewing and the time for children to go to bed: 'after *Carosello*' became the proper time for a whole generation to go to bed.

The cancellation of the enormously popular programme was due to a number of factors linked to the cultural climate of the 1970s—political terrorism, youth protest, criticism of consumer culture, economic recession in Italy—as well as to the end of RAI's monopoly on broadcasting in 1976. If the change in cultural climate forced advertising to become more rational, informative and product-oriented, and also less expensive, the end of the RAI's monopoly and the advent of **private television** produced a true revolution of the television system itself, within which advertising came to play a leading role, particularly during the 1980s.

The 1970s witnessed three other major innovations: the birth of social advertising (called *Pubblicità Progresso* or Progressive Advertising), the beginning of sponsorship (especially in sports programmes), and the introduction of colour, which allowed for a wider exploration of audiovisual language.

Advertising in the age of competition

The advent of commercial channels during the late 1970s and 1980s produced a major change in the role of television: from a primarily informative and educational medium under state control, it became a source of diversion and entertainment more along the lines of the American model. The birth of commercial television was a business decision: there was a demand for advertising time on television which exceeded what the RAI could supply, and it was this source of revenue that the new broadcasters—with **Berlusconi** in the lead—sought to tap in order to finance their various enterprises, using even highly unconventional and unscrupulous methods such as special offers and free broadcast time which brought confusion to the market. The result was an overcrowding of advertisements and sponsorship on the commercial channels, as well as a huge increase in the number of ads on the public channels.

For a time in the 1980s the situation was almost grotesque: advertising revenues rose from 911 billion lira in 1979 to 4,640 billion in 1986, and the commercial channels themselves recognized the need to reduce the amount of advertising in order to avoid counterproductive effects such as saturation, rejection and zapping. A brilliant depiction of the situation was given in Fellini's 1986 film *Ginger e Fred*, where the hyperbole of television advertising is represented in a range of different formats: huge posters with sexy images, televisual screens everywhere, and enormous gadgets advertising Italian products, especially food. Television has become merely a container for advertising, and the old fashioned show (represented by the two dancers) is reduced to a sort of introduction (paradoxically, a 'publicity' role) for the 'modern' show, a mix of personal stories and spots, where all distinctions are erased (for example, a Dante Alighieri puppet advertises a watch). All this is set against the background of a physically and socially degraded metropolis, suggesting that the 'hyperrealistic' images of ads draw attention away from reality, and finally destroy it.

It is significant that during the 1980s, unlike preceding decades, advertising campaigns were primarily television campaigns, and press advertisements and posters were largely considered as a kind of backup for the television commercials. The exception to this

general rule was the press and poster campaign for **Benetton** orchestrated by Oliviero **Toscani**, a photographer who used provocative and sometimes shocking images in the style of reportage, such as a new-born baby, a **mafia** killing, or a man dying of AIDS (see also **HIV/AIDS**), to attract the consumer's attention in a world overcrowded with advertising.

Advertising in the age of globalization

From its beginnings, advertising played a key role in popular culture by creating a repertoire of social situations and suggesting a range of codes of good manners to apply in different circumstances. It thus helped overcome some of the resistance to new domestic and technical products by framing them within appropriate settings and contexts of use. Even though most of the advertising agencies in Italy are now branches of international firms (apart from few exceptions such as the A.Testa agency in Turin, which started in 1946 as a graphic studio, became an agency in 1956 and was the first Italian agency to open in New York in the 1960s), advertising campaigns tend to be sensitive to the cultural context in which they are received. There are themes and representations that appear to be culturally specific to Italian advertising and which have endured for decades: the overwhelming presence of the family; a focus on interpersonal (mainly conjugal) relationships and on faithfulness and indissolubility as attributes of the male-female relationship that are transferred to the woman-product relationship; a sharp distinction between male and female characters; an outspoken, redundant style in which the verbal track often duplicates the visual one. Nevertheless, the international flow of images, products and people on the one hand and the fragmentation of Italian society and the cultural differences between the North and the South of the country on the other appear to have weakened the core values upon which cultural and national identities were grounded and these changes have become visible in the way advertising itself has changed.

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CHIARA GIACCARDI

Agamben, Giorgio

b. 1942, Rome

Philosopher

Professor of philosophy at the University of Macerata and later at the University of Verona, Agamben was also for some time Director of the Philosophy Programme at the Collège International de Philosophie in Paris. He attended Martin Heidegger's seminars in Le Thor in 1966–8 and, beginning in 1982, produced the Italian edition of the collected works of Walter Benjamin. Associated with the magazine ***Aut aut***, Agamben came to be one of the most widely read and influential of the new Italian philosophers. His works include *Stanze* (Stanzas) (1977) on the problem of representation; *Infanzia e storia* (Infancy and History) (1979) on the relationship between experience and knowledge; *Il linguaggio e la morte* (Language and Death) (1982), an analysis of the place of negativity in philosophical discourse; and *La comunità che viene* (The Coming Community) (1990) on the contemporary forms of sociality. *Homo sacer* (1995) and *Mezzi senza fine* (Means Without End) (1996) are a rethinking of political categories in a period of crisis for the nation-state. Agamben writes in an erudite and epigrammatic style, and his work is a mixture of philology and contemporary linguistics imbued with references to medieval scholars and theorists of Judeo-Christian scripture.

LAURENCE SIMMONS

Age and Scarpelli

Perhaps the most famous and versatile scriptwriting team of Italian postwar cinema, Age (Agenore Incrocci, b. 1919, Brescia) and Scarpelli (Furio Scarpelli, b. 1919, Rome) began their long partnership by writing some of the **Totò** movies. However their real triumph was to bring Italian film comedy out of **neorealism** and into the so-called comedy Italian style (**commedia all'Italiana**). Eventually they also played an instrumental role in the major transformation of the genre in the 1970s. They scripted many of the early classics of the genre: **Monicelli's** *I soliti ignoti* (Big Deal on Madonna Street) (1958) and *La grande guerra* (The Great War) (1959), Dino **Risi's** *I mostri* (The Monsters) (1963) and **Germi's** *Sedotta e abbandonata* (Seduced and Abandoned) (1964). In the 1970s they wrote some of **Scola's** best films, from *C'eravamo tanto amati* (We All Loved Each Other So Much) (1974) to *La terrazza* (The Terrace) (1980), a caustic and

self-reflexive critique of both comedy Italian style and the society it portrayed and perhaps produced. In the mid-1980s their fertile collaboration came to an end.

MANUELA GIERI

Agnelli family

The most famous entrepreneurial dynasty of Italy, owners of **Fiat** and Juventus, a popular Italian football team, the Agnelli are the very emblem of private family-based capitalism, Italian style. In spite of the tremendous growth of Fiat in the century since its foundation, the family has succeeded in retaining control of the company through financial holdings whose exclusive shareholders have always been members of the family and by solid alliances with other entrepreneurial families such as the **Pirelli**. Nevertheless, what might be called ‘the Buddenbrook syndrome’—that is, the fear of the extinction of the dynasty and its vocation for business—has surfaced as a recurring threat in the family’s history, obliging it to face the choice of either continuing their entrepreneurial tradition or becoming simple rentiers.

Management, in fact, has been quite a demanding inheritance, and transmission of it has never turned out to be smooth. In 1945, Giovanni Agnelli, the founder and, until then, absolute ruler died with no heirs to take his place, since Edoardo, his only son, had been killed in 1935 in an air crash, and Gianni, his elder nephew, was still too young. The family thus appointed Vittorio Valletta, a powerful manager who had been the founder’s right hand, as chairman of the group. After Valletta’s exit in 1966, Gianni (a cosmopolitan figure, then considered a golden boy of the international jet-set) and his younger brother Umberto felt obliged to take a leading role, but soon neglected their managerial responsibilities. Gianni, nicknamed the Lawyer, (*l’avvocato*), became leader of the **Confindustria** (the Employers Association), while Umberto, pursuing political ambitions, was elected a senator for the Christian Democrat party. One of the Agnelli sisters, Susanna, also followed a political career in the Italian Republican Party (**PRI**) which culminated in her becoming Minister of Foreign Affairs in the **Dini** government (1995–6). During the 1970s, even Gianni was unable to disguise his ambition to achieve prestigious public office such as Italy’s ambassador to the United States. Moreover Edoardo, Gianni’s son, showed no entrepreneurial vocation at all, declaring himself deeply distrustful of science and technology and rather fond of Eastern philosophy. No wonder that in the harsh crisis of the mid-1970s, rumours spread that the Agnelli were about to abandon business.

The dilemma was again resolved by hiring dynamic external managers such as Cesare **Romiti** and Vittorio Ghidella, who succeeded in relaunching Fiat’s fortunes. Finally in the 1990s, the Agnelli had to prepare the succession in view of Gianni’s (and Romiti’s) exit, though this could no longer be only a family affair since external shareholders (such as foreign banks) had gained a large influence and Fiat needed strong international alliances to cope with the challenge of global markets. All the family’s hopes were placed in Giovanni, Umberto’s son, a promising young manager educated in the United States, who had already successfully run Piaggio (the motorbike company which produces the

famous Vespa); moreover he was also a strong believer in promoting social progress and a fervent supporter of planning and innovation. Unfortunately, losing the fight against a rare form of cancer in December 1997, he died at only 33 and, as a result the dynasty's entrepreneurial continuity became unpredictable once more.

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STEFANO BATTILOSSI

Agosti, Stefano

b. 1930, Caprino Veronese, Verona

Academic and critic

Professor of French literature at the University of Venice, Agosti has published extensively on French and Italian poetry and narrative (notably on Stephan Mallarmé, Gustave Flaubert, Francesco Petrarca, Pier Paolo **Pasolini** and Andrea **Zanzotto**) and on literary theory. Regarded as one of the most distinguished Italian scholars, Agosti views literature from a comparative perspective, with particular sensitivity to the most recent debates in contemporary literary theory. His textual analyses display his interest in psychoanalysis and linguistics, always supported by a solid philological competence.

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FRANCESCA PARMEGGIANI

agriculture

In the past half-century, the place of agriculture in Italian society has been utterly transformed. Many of the practices, values and social relations of a rural world less than

two generations away have been dispatched into history by the combined forces of the industrial economic miracle, massive **emigration** from the countryside of the South and Northeast, the impact of the **European Union's** Common Agricultural Policy and contemporary agribusiness. The disappearance of that world has, however, been far from uniform or complete: in the South, the proportion of the workforce in agriculture is still double that in the North, and one in seven Italian households still owns agricultural land. Moreover, the residue of a society built around the power of landed property and the deference of peasants includes a prolonged, often deeply ambivalent, afterglow in contemporary Italian culture: see, among many examples, Bernardo **Bertolucci's** film *1900* (1976) and Ermanno **Olmi's** *The Tree of Wooden Clogs* (1978).

Yesterday's world

In 1951 almost half (42 per cent) of Italy's workforce derived its primary livelihood from agriculture. The poorer South was more dependent on agriculture than the North, but systems of tenure, land use and rural family relations could vary widely within regions. Large capitalist enterprises using wage-labour for industrial crops were found mainly in the Po Valley; sharecropping farms, with returns divided in fixed proportions between landlord and tenant, dominated the **Third Italy**; and peasant cultivation of cereals, olives and vines by family labour was characteristic of the Alpine regions and South, where it existed alongside large extensively-farmed estates (*latifundi*). Ownership of land was very unevenly distributed everywhere. Fewer than 5 per cent of owners held half of Italy's privately-owned land, most peasant households had barely sufficient land of their own to ensure subsistence, and many of the usually underemployed rural workers had no land at all: herding animals—sheep in the hills and mountains, cattle on the plains—offered better returns but greater risks. One-quarter of all households, and a much higher proportion of those dependent on agriculture, were officially classified as in hardship or destitute. Protest followed by emigration—repeating the pattern of the late nineteenth century—was the immediate postwar response to such levels of deprivation and insecurity.

Between 1944 and 1950, mass occupations of large estates across Italy forced the government to concede a land reform which, despite the 700,000 hectares distributed to 121,000 families, offered too little to too few. The urgent task of modernizing the technologically backward rural sector was entrusted to state agencies, Federconsorzi, **Cassa per il Mezzogiorno** (Fund for the South) and producer associations (Coldiretti), which, however, did as much to press farmers into voting for the governing parties as to provide them with financial support and technical assistance. Many peasants and day labourers chose to leave, preferring industrial work in northwest Italy or abroad, while others sought white-collar jobs in cities and the offices of Italy's expanding welfare state. Despite the Green Plans of the 1960s and a series of laws improving the contractual rights of tenants, agriculture came to seem one of the least attractive occupations. Areas where few alternatives to agriculture existed became seriously depopulated, and already by 1970, making a living solely from ownership of land or livestock remained the aspiration of a declining and disproportionately aged minority almost everywhere.

Contemporary agriculture

By the mid-1990s, agriculture accounted for only 6 per cent of all workers, and the number of farms and area of land under cultivation had both been reduced by about 15 per cent since 1970. Share-cropper farms, which in 1961 numbered nearly half a million and covered 4 million hectares, had all but disappeared, taking with them the distinctive rural culture of central and northeast Italy. Agricultural production had become more diverse, greatly reducing the importance of wheat in favour of fruit, flowers and industrial crops. Cattle numbers had fallen steadily while sheep increased, especially in Sardinia, which accounted for about half the national total. Specialization within and between regions developed strongly. In Tuscany, Piedmont and the Veneto, emphasis came to be placed on the extremely localized identification of quality products such as **wine** and **olive oil**, with substantial foreign investment: poorer qualities for mass domestic consumption were produced in the South. More mechanized farms—two-thirds now had tractors—could rely solely on individual or family labour and on services contracted from other farmers. Wage labour still remained significant in the South, however, where African immigrants were able to take on seasonal and poorly paid work in the tomato industry which had become one of Italy's major agricultural exporters. Yet, despite rapid gains in productivity and substantial support from Europe's Common Agricultural Policy and structural funds, Italian agricultural and livestock production remained unable to meet domestic demand: the appetite for meat, in particular, could only be satisfied by imports from Germany. The national deficit was closely associated with the persisting importance of small farms and part-time work. Average farm size (6 hectares) remained half the European average and was almost unchanged since the 1960s: within Europe, Italy remained uniquely polarized between very large and very small enterprises. One in four farmers also had a non-agricultural job which kept families on the land, in line with the EU encouragement of ecologically beneficial strategies for rural areas, but inhibited productivity, capital investment and the ability to compete with larger farms in Northern Europe. Technologically and ecologically, Italian agriculture remains incompletely modernized.

See also: economic miracle; peasants; regions; Southern Question

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DAVID MOSS

Alberoni, Francesco

b. 8 December 1929, Piacenza

Sociologist

In Italy, Alberoni has become the country's bestknown sociologist, less through his academic works than his regular columns in *Il Corriere della sera* and the great success of his short books on big themes (love, good and evil, ethics). Trained in medicine and psychology, influenced by Ernst Bloch, Teilhard de Chardin and Ilya Prigogine, Alberoni's work explores the dynamics of social relations. In various styles, he tries to capture the fleetingly successful attempts by individuals and social groups to institutionalize meanings and values. His sociological writings range widely: modernization in Sardinia, **immigration**, consumption, classes and generations, the star system and party activists. He also played a notable role at the Istituto Superiore di Scienze Sociali (University of Trento) at the time of the **student movement**.

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DAVID MOSS

Albertazzi, Giorgio

b. 8 August 1923, Fiesole, Florence

Actor and director

After growing up in the Florentine circle around Luchino **Visconti**, Albertazzi achieved prominence in the early 1950s as a star performer both on the stage and in televised plays as well as appearing in Alain Resnais' landmark film, *L'année dernière à Marienbad*

(Last Year at Marienbad) (1960). For many years he carried on both an artistic and personal relationship with Anna Proclemer, with whom in 1965, after several years of delay due to problems with censorship, he produced *La governante* (The Housekeeper), written by Vitaliano **Brancati**. As an actor, he was a brilliant and magnetic Hamlet in 1963, a thorough neurotic in **Brusati's** 1967 *Pietà di novembre* (Pity of November) and threatening and unpredictable in a 1981 production of Pirandello's *Enrico IV* (Henry IV). He has often modified scripts to suit his own purposes, and directs himself on stage. The results are always culturally refined but often tinged with a certain mannerism, with sometimes a lack of strong direction of the other actors, in spite of his own claims to achieving an almost trance-like state.

PAOLO PUPPA

Albini, Franco

b. 17 October 1905, Robbiate, Como; d. 1977, Milan

Architect

Albini's design, ranging from fittings and furniture to town planning, found its highest expression in the fields of restoration and exhibition, where his unmistakable stylistic traits were elegance of design, refinement of detail and technical virtuosity. His most influential works are in Genoa, and include two reconstructed Renaissance palaces, the Palazzo Bianco (White Palace) and the Palazzo Rosso (Red Palace), a series of dramatically-lit underground circular rooms adjacent to the cathedral, built to house the Treasury of the Cathedral of San Lorenzo, and the Sant'Agostino Museum restoration and addition. Other outstanding works include La Rinascente department store in Rome, the Linea 1 stations of the Milan subway and the Thermal Bath Building at Salsomaggiore, Terme.

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ROSS JENNER

alfabeta

The most important cultural magazine to appear in Italy during the 1980s, *alfabeta* was founded in Milan in May 1979 by Nanni **Balestrini**, who assembled an eleven-member

editorial committee bringing together some of the most illustrious names of Italian postwar culture, amongst them Maria **Corti**, Umberto **Eco**, Antonio **Porta**, Pier Aldo Rovatti and Paolo **Volponi**. The magazine, in tabloid format similar to the *New York Review of Books* and the *Times Literary Supplement*, appeared monthly until 1988 and, as well as major articles by members of the editorial board, also hosted a wide range of contributions on all aspects of modern culture from Italian writers and intellectuals such as **Cacciari**, **Vattimo** and **Galvino** as well as prestigious foreign names like Habermas and Lyotard. Although it never sold more than 15,000 copies, the magazine became a major point of reference for cultural discussion and critical reflection during those years, not least on the difficult topic of terrorism.

Further reading

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GINO MOLITERNO

Alitalia

Established in 1946 as Aerolinee Italiane Internazionali but soon merged with Linee Aeree Internazionali in 1947, Alitalia became Italy's national airline. Originally operating thirty-seven planes over a network of 49,000 km, it carried fewer than 120,000 passengers a year. However, it modernized rapidly, and by 1968 Alitalia had an all-jet fleet, subsequently updated further by the acquisition two- and three-engined Boeing and McDonnell-Douglas jets. At the same time, it developed a wide network of international and intercontinental routes over Europe, the USA and South America, while national routes were left to its subsidiary ATI (Aero-Trasporti Italiani), which was merged with the parent company in 1994. By the late 1990s Alitalia was flying 144 jets over a network of 200,000 km, covering 130 destinations in 60 countries around the globe and moving 25 million passengers a year. However, from the 1980s it came under increasing pressure from international competition, and began incurring greater losses. In 1996 a reorganization was undertaken in order to reduce debts, cut down operating costs and improve economic performance. Alitalia also established co-operative agreements with a number of American and European airlines, and in 1998 entered a strategic partnership with KLM, a Dutch carrier, in order to better confront increasingly keen competition both internationally and domestically.

STEFANO BATTILOSSI

L'altra domenica

L'altra domenica (Another Side of Sunday) is regarded as a monument in Italian television history. Largely modelled on his popular radio program *Alto gradimento* (High Appreciation), in March 1976 Renzo **Arbore** invented a new format for weekend TV entertainment on the second RAI channel. By mixing classic Sunday afternoon football fever with other games and music, and using the telephone for the first time ever in live television events—people would ring from home with answers to a silly quiz—Arbore was able to create a interesting and bizarre climate of cultural mayhem. Roberto **Benigni** as a surrealistic cinematographic critic, Andy Luotto, the strange American cousin, the cartoons of Maurizio **Nichetti**, Isabella Rossellini on the phone live from the United States and the trans-gender musical group *Sorelle Bandiera* (The Flag Sisters), all became familiar acts in a crazy circus. A world away from the subdued programs on the RAI's other channel, *L'altra domenica* represented a breath of fresh air for the intelligent and the curious so from 1976 to 1979, it attracted a devoted public who made it into something of a cult programme.

RICCARDO VENTRELLA

Amato, Giuliano

b. 13 May 1938, Turin

Politician and professor of constitutional law

Known as 'Doctor Subtilis' (Doctor Subtle) for his diplomatic and political skills, Amato graduated in jurisprudence and subsequently taught constitutional law at Rome University. Speaking impeccable English and well regarded in international circles, he has also held visiting professorships at several prestigious American institutes and universities.

A convinced socialist, Amato joined the **PSI** in 1958 and was an elected member of the Chamber of Deputies from 1983–94 (see also **Parliament**). Undersecretary to the Prime Minister in 1983–7, he became Deputy Prime Minister in 1987–8 and Treasury Minister in 1988–9 as well as deputy secretary of the PSI between 1989–92. A close associate of Bettino **Craxi**, Amato was appointed Prime Minister in 1992 in Craxi's place. In March 1993 the Amato government attempted to pass a decree law which would have retrospectively decriminalized illegal financing of political parties, but President **Scalfaro** refused to sign the law and Amato resigned. He subsequently served as

president of the Anti-Trust Authority between 1994–7. He returned to government as Minister for Institutional Reform under **Prodi** in 1998 and Treasury Minister under **D'Alema** in 1999.

JAMES WALSTON

Amelio, Gianni

b. 20 January 1945, San Pietro Magisano, Catanzaro

Film director

One of the most impressive directors of the 'new' generation, Amelio achieved international acclaim with his 1992 film *Ladro di bambini* (The Stolen Children). He came to be regarded as the leading representative of a cinema committed to a realistic reflection of, and commentary upon, pressing historical, social and political issues.

After being abandoned by his father, who emigrated permanently to South America, Amelio grew up in a poor town of the South. In 1965 he moved to Rome and had the chance to work as an assistant to director Vittorio **De Seta** on his *Un uomo a metà* (A Man in Half) (1966). For several years he collaborated on a wide variety of filmic ventures including spaghetti westerns, musicals and advertising. His first film as director was *La fine del gioco* (The End of the Game), a 1970 low-budget black and white film shown on Italian public television as part of a series titled *Programmi sperimentali* (Experimental Programmes). In 1976, Amelio revealed one of the main influences on his own film-making by shooting a documentary on the making of Bernardo **Bertolucci's** *Novecento* (1900). Indeed, the lesson of the 'masters' of Italian cinematic **neorealism** is filtered through Bertolucci in many of Amelio's films, such as *Colpire al cuore* (Aim at the Heart) (1982), *I ragazzi di Via Panisperna* (The Boys in Panisperna Road) (1988) and *Porte aperte* (Open Doors) (1990). In these films, Amelio freely borrowed images and rhythms from Bertolucci's filmography. It was only with *Ladro di bambini*, a gripping portrayal of the dismal reality of contemporary Italy where children are physically exploited, dispossessed of their innocence, and then abandoned in morally and emotionally deserted territories, that Amelio found his own personal way of retrieving and reactivating the neorealist mandate for a cinema committed to a realistic portrayal and a thorough critique of social and political injustice.

Amelio's films were often powerful premonitions of things to come, as in the case of *Lamerica* (1994), which deals with the devastating situation in Albania at the close of the twentieth century. The project was prompted by the devastating events of 1991, when Italians watched on national television the desperate exodus of thousands of Albanians trying to find a refuge and a home in Italy. After several trips to post-communist Albania, Amelio conceived of a story which draws impressive parallels between contemporary Albania and the Italy of the 1940s, where morally and economically impoverished people nourish the desperate dream of emigrating to a foreign country as the land of plenty (see **emigration**). The conclusion leaves the audience speechless and disturbed as the story

develops a relentless critique of Western culture built on exploitation and imperialism, a disturbing critique of ourselves.

See also: New Italian Cinema

Further reading

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MANUELA GIERI

Amendola, Giorgio

b. 21 November 1907, Rome; d. 5 June 1980, Rome

Politician

The son of socialist leader Giovanni Amendola, Giorgio joined the **PCI** in 1929 but was soon arrested and sent into internal exile. He subsequently went to France in 1937 as a representative of the party, and then to Tunisia where he organized the party underground. Expelled from Tunisia, he returned to France and then to Italy in April 1943, becoming a leading member of the CLN (Committee of National Liberation). At war's end he served as undersecretary to the Prime Minister under Parri and **De Gasperi** from June 1945 to June 1946. Elected to the **Constituent Assembly**, he remained a parliamentary deputy from 1946 to his death, and was also elected to the European Parliament in 1975. He was a member of the PCI's Central Committee and party executive from the Fifth Congress. After Palmiro **Togliatti's** death in 1964, Amendola led the PCI's reformist wing which proposed a new type of party of the Left, neither completely Marxist nor completely social democrat.

JAMES WALSTON

American influence

The image of the United States in Italy in 1945 could almost be summed up in three terms: chocolate, chewing gum and boogie-woogie. The fabled destination of so many poor emigrants at the end of the nineteenth century had now also become the instrument of liberation from Nazi occupation. As the initial glow subsided, however, the question arose: would American influence receive cautious acceptance, or would it be regarded as colonization?

Given Italy's geopolitical position, there was an active American presence in Italian politics throughout the Cold War period in order to guard against the threat of Communism. Marshall Plan aid helped to feed a starving Italy but it also came with certain conditions, and Clare Boothe Luce, American ambassador to Italy during this period, played a key role in maintaining Italy's place on the Western side of the Iron Curtain. Culturally, however—and in spite of the importance that would later be given to **neorealism**—the main focus of the invasion was through the cinema: American movies, prohibited by the Fascist regime, were now everywhere and John Wayne, James Dean and Marilyn Monroe became matinee idols for Italians just as they were for American audiences. *'Tu vuoi, fa l'americano'* (You Wanna be American), sang Renato Carosone in 1957 in an ironic way; but the phrase came to be repeated with approval, especially by the younger set, on Italian piazzas and from Italian jukeboxes everywhere.

The attitude of Communist intellectuals remained ambivalent. There had already been the discovery and popularization of authors like Ernest Hemingway and William Faulkner by left-leaning writers such as Elio **Vittorini** and Cesare **Pavese**, and a similar popularity was later afforded to Jack Kerouac and the Beat Generation. In 1950 the **Venice Biennale** officially welcomed and hosted the first exhibition of Jackson Pollock and Action Painting. Yet the official attitude of the Communist Party (**PCI**) was to continue to characterize American culture as a sort of social degeneration.

The end of the 1950s saw two different mythologies arise. The first looked to John F. Kennedy and aspired to world peace through a different relationship with the USSR. The other looked to Elvis Presley and rock'n'roll music, with blue jeans becoming the most desired American import as the first signs of a youth culture began to appear. Soon, imitating American rock singers, young Italian 'shouters' like Adriano **Celentano** scandalized lovers of the melodic tradition with hit songs like *24 mila baci* (Twenty-Four Thousand Kisses).

Paradoxically, in spite of the leftist politics of the 1968 movement, it too was influenced by American models, especially by the student agitation at American universities. The war in Vietnam provoked similar opposition from the younger generation in Italy as in America, and it became one of the movement's main points of reference. The 'summer of love' and American hippie ideals also found a place in Italy, as did the music of Bob Dylan and psychedelic rock groups like Jefferson Airplane.

The renewed growth of the Communist Party in the 1970s again prompted an active role for the United States in Italian politics, and the CIA was widely believed to have played some part in the terrorist activities of those years. If all youth movements after 1977 openly criticized America as the kingdom of capitalism and economic exploitation, American influence nevertheless continued to spread in Italy in the 1980s through cinema, literature, music, fashion and sports. Steven Spielberg, Woody Allen and Quentin Tarantino all came to occupy a place in the imagination of Italian movie-goers and, at the beginning of the 1990s, grunge-style flannel shirts and the music of Nirvana also invaded Italy. American novelists like Stephen King and John Grisham are bestsellers at the newsstands and **private television** has constructed much of its success on American serials like *Beverly Hills 90210*, and *Melrose Place*. As the world shrinks into an ever-smaller global electronic village at the end of the twentieth century, American influence in Italy has never been greater.

See also: pop and rock music

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RICCARDO VENTRELLA

Aneschi, Luciano

b. 20 February 1911, Milan; d. May 1995, Bologna

Literary critic and philosopher

Lecturer in aesthetics and specialist in the theory of literary criticism at the University of Bologna, Aneschi was a pupil of Antonio **Banfi** and interested in the phenomenology of artistic forms. He believed that the analysis of poetic structures was the first stage towards ascertaining transcendental aesthetic structures. His study of poetry focused on the baroque and the twentieth century as periods of crisis and experimentation, which he explored in critical essays and also by publishing influential anthologies of poetry such as *Lirici nuovi* (New Lyricists) (1942). He was one of the first critics to respond positively to the work of the hermetic poets, and was actively involved in promoting avantgarde movements in the 1960s. Aneschi was also editor-in-chief of the important periodical *il verri* which he founded in 1956 and which soon became a focus for the publication of experimental poetry as well as a vehicle for introducing the work of foreign poets such as T.S. Eliot to Italy. He won the Feltrinelli Prize for Literary Criticism in 1992.

See also: Gruppo 63; poetry

LAURENCE SIMMONS

Andreotti, Giulio

b. 14 January 1919, Rome

Politician

The curriculum vitae of Andreotti—devout Catholic, Christian Democrat leader, seven times Prime Minister, life senator, alleged associate of the **mafia**—is often taken to display both the inspiration and instincts of Italy’s postwar governing class. Similarly, his ecclesiastical connections, his apparently interminable occupation of high office and his ability to pass unscathed through scandal have given him the status of the quintessential Christian Democrat. Yet in several respects—a limited power base in his party, a chilly reluctance to play either the populist or the intellectual, an independence from the social groups and institutions providing his firmest support—he has also been anomalous among **DC** leaders. His retort to observations about the pernicious consequences of long-term occupation of power—‘il potere logora chi non ce l’ha’ (power corrodes those without it)—neatly summarizes his emphasis on power as an end rather than a means. Indeed, despite an uninterruptedly successful political career, his name cannot be linked to any distinctive political vision or notable public achievement. Significantly, his diaries covering the dramatic years 1976–9 are the least informative that any politician of comparable seniority can ever have authored.

Andreotti’s interest in politics was aroused in 1938 by Alcide **De Gasperi**, an early mentor. In 1942, Andreotti replaced **Moro** as President of the Catholic university student organization (FUCI), in which many DC leaders began their careers, alongside the ‘Communist—Christians’ who would later facilitate his acceptability to the **PCI** to lead ‘national solidarity’ governments between 1976 and 1979. In 1947 he was appointed to his first government position: for the following forty-five years, until the close of his seventh and final term as Prime Minister in 1992, he was rarely out of government office. His career took him principally to Defence (1959–66) and Foreign Affairs (1980s), which enabled him to acquire valuable knowledge of the activities of the unreliable security services (see **terrorism**) and to establish firm links with the United States.

Like Moro, Andreotti achieved political success without the support of a large party faction. His group, Primavera (1954–64), was tiny, its support confined to Rome and its hinterland where, thanks to his links in church and state bureaucracies, Andreotti enjoyed a vast personal following. After 1968, his role in the DC was strengthened by the allegiance of the Sicilian DC leader Salvo Lima (mayor of Palermo, national and Euro-MP, linked to the **mafia**, and murdered in 1992). In the 1980s Andreotti established a close political alliance with the **PSI** leader and Prime Minister, Bettino **Craxi**. In 1994, evidence from **pentiti** ended Andreotti’s charmed life among dubious associates, when he was charged with using his power to protect mafia interests in return for political support.

Further reading

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DAVID MOSS

Ansa (Agenzia nazionale stampa associata)

Founded in January 1945 by the leading Italian newspapers as a private co-operative, Ansa (National Agency of Associated Press) soon became the country's leading news agency. Although, beginning in the 1960s, it greatly extended its scope and upgraded its technological capacities to now be on par with other international information agencies, it has remained a co-operative with the participation of some forty-five daily newspapers, although it now also supplies news services and information to other private and commercial entities.

Ansa's headquarters are located in Rome, from which are administered eighteen regional offices in Italy and ninety bureaux throughout the world, employing 600 full-time journalists and 500 foreign correspondents. Ansa's DEA archive contains all Ansa news reports since 1 January 1981, and since 1998 Ansa has also offered a public access news page on the Internet.

See also: information agencies

GINO MOLITERNO

Anselmo, Giovanni

b. 5 August, 1934, Borgofranco d'Ivrea, Turin

Artist

Anselmo shares with Gilberto **Zorio** a fascination with energy. His *La struttura che mangia* (The Structure that Eats) (1968) has fresh lettuce being 'consumed' between slabs of granite, while his *Torsione* (Torsion) (1968) consists of cowhide twisted by a piece of wood. He explains: 'My work really consists of making physical the force of an action or the energy of a situation... I know of no other way of being at the heart of

reality; my work becomes an extension of my living, my thinking, my acting'. This approach to materials and the idea of bringing art closer to life made Anselmo a key figure in *arte povera*. Since the mid-1980s, he has explored our relationship to gravity using large triangles of granite held upright by cables, in which the stone, pointing northwards, seems about to take off.

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ROBERT LUMLEY

anti-design

Anti-design was a radical movement of architects and designers which, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, set out to challenge the direction in which design had been moving in the previous two decades. Also called 'contro-design' (counter-design) or radical design, the name was given to the collective efforts of a number of groups of young architects, based for the most part based in Florence; among them were **Archizoom**, **Superstudio**, **UFO** and Gruppo **NNNN** (in addition to the individual designer, Ugo La Pietra). They rejected the idea of designers working as the handmaidens of industry, intent on producing goods which encouraged conspicuous consumption within the context of late capitalism, and favoured a more idealistic and radical engagement with the concepts of design and architecture. They also rejected the 'chic' image of the designed artefact which had characterized Italian design in the international arena in the years of the **economic miracle**.

Linked to radical student politics in these years, and inspired by the humour and irony of the American Pop artists who, in turn, looked back to the tactics of the surrealists to create an art of provocation, these young designers presented writings, photographs and images of idealized monuments and artefacts, among them Superstudio's *Twelve Ideal Cities* of 1971 and Archizoom's *No-stop City* of the previous year, which set out to challenge the non-involvement of the Italian architect and designer with political life and urban issues.

The movement had its first manifestations in 1966 and was strongly influenced by the work of the older architect/designer Ettore **Sottsass**, who had an exhibition of highly personal furniture propositions in Milan in that year. Sottsass was the first of his generation to stand outside the relentless direction of the design/industry alliance and to project idealized designs which suggested a questioning of the status quo.

While the vast majority of Anti-design statements remained on the level of idealized propositions, a few were directed at the marketplace. Notable among these were two furniture items manufactured by the Zanotta company, which had established a tradition of working with radical designers. The 'Sacco', a bag of polyeurathane pellets designed by Gatti, Paolini and Teodoro and produced in 1969, quickly became a classic

‘antidesign’ object, standing as it did for formlessness and a flexible, youthful lifestyle. Lomazzi, D’Ubino and De Pas’s ‘Joe’ sofa of the following year, a giant leather baseball glove for sitting in, was a design version of a Claes Oldenburg sculpture.

Anti-design made its impact on the architectural and design world through the exhibitions which promoted it, among them *Superarchitecture* at Pistoia and Modena in 1966 and 1967; the magazines which documented their activities, among them *Casabella* and *IN*; and through shared projects such as the ‘Separate School for Expanded Conceptual Architecture’ (1970); and ‘Global Tools’ (1973). By the mid-1970s, however, the movement had faded from view.

See also: interior design

Further reading

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PENNY SPARKE

anti-fascism

ideology

The military humiliations of the Second World War, the experience of **Resistance**, occupation and bombing, and the revelations of Fascist collaboration in the Holocaust left Mussolini’s regime with few supporters after 1945. The Italian **Republic** was thus created not only to replace the dictatorship but with anti-fascism as its essential ideology. The dictatorship had emphasized hierarchy and one-man rule; the Republic would be parliamentary and democratic. Fascism had privileged the wealthier sections of society; the Republic would be based on labour. Mussolini had held women in contempt; the Republic would at once give them the vote and would aim at their further liberation. The Fascist regime had stood for centralization and for war; the anti-fascist Republic would recognize the **regions** and would be pledged to a peaceful **foreign policy**. Committed to anti-fascism, Italy would at last become a place of liberty, equality, fraternity and happy gender relations.

The purity of these ideals was, however, soon compromised by political practice, both national and international. As the Cold War descended over Europe, anti-communism challenged anti-fascism as Italy’s governing ideology. In the elections of 1948, it became clear that Italy was indeed to be part of the liberal capitalist and anti-communist ‘West’. In these circumstances, during the 1950s, a decade dominated by anti-communism, anti-fascism became largely associated with the political and cultural opposition both to Christian Democrat and to American hegemony. For anti-fascists, the injuries done to the Italian people by Fascism had not been altogether amended by the fall of the regime. Its harmful legacy in, for example, the continuing harsh treatment of trade unionists, the

failure to carry through regional reform, the survival of such reactionary social policies as the ban on **divorce** and the retention of an unpurged police and bureaucracy, needed still to be expunged. Thus until the 1980s, most programmes of political reform in Italy took anti-fascism as their starting point. Although Italy was a place of many political parties and even more social variation, in the world of ideas the essential contest from 1945 to about 1990 was fought out between conservatives who maintained that communism was the greatest evil of the twentieth century and, given its continued presence in Italy, the greatest threat there, and leftists who believed that Nazism and Fascism were the greater evil and that a vigilance against those ideas must be exercised continually.

With the thaw in the First Cold War from the 1960s onwards, anti-communism for a time weakened while anti-fascism took on renewed vigour. By the 1970s anti-fascism appeared to have become the dominant ideology in Italian public culture and was especially exemplified in cinema and literature. Anti-fascism was also evoked in the political sphere as long overdue social reforms were enacted, the union movement blossomed, and the legitimization of the PCI by entry into national government appeared imminent. A Christian Democrat leader like Benigno **Zaccagnini**, who had been a Resistance fighter near his home town of Ravenna, seemed to embody the possibilities of the '**historic compromise**' and to demonstrate that Italy's governing classes were now more committed to anti-fascism than to anti-communism.

However, the onset of the 'Second Cold War' between the USA of Ronald Reagan (President 1981–9) and the USSR, in what was its terminal decline, coincided with Italy's recoil from the radicalism of the 1970s, and with the marginalization of left-wing terrorists who had claimed to be the 'New Resistance' and thus the genuine antifascists. It became clear that much of conservative Italy, as assembled in the **P2** Masonic Lodge or as organized in Operation **Gladio**, had retained a visceral anti-communism.

In 1978, Sandro **Pertini**, an independent socialist and old Resistance fighter, became President of the Republic. His record of active opposition to Mussolini and the political causes which he had favoured since 1945 seemed to incarnate anti-fascism in its purest sense. As if to demonstrate a mass consensus for the ideals of anti-fascism Pertini became more popular than any other president, before or since. However, Pertini's purism might be better defined as naivety. His term of office coincided with the rise of a newly rapacious politics typified by Pertini's fellow socialist, Bettino **Craxi**. For this member of the new generation (born 1934) memories of the Fascist dictatorship lacked relevance in the world of Thatcher, Reagan and Silvio **Berlusconi**.

Italian culture was similarly switching its focus. A good example of this change can be seen in the work of the film directors the **Taviani brothers**, Paolo and Vittorio. Although in the 1970s they had appeared 'anti-Fascists like everyone else', by the time of *La notte di San Lorenzo* (The Night of the Shooting Stars) (1982) they had drifted into a post-modernist construction of the past in which history had no definite lessons. Then, in *Good Morning Babilonia* (1987) and *Fiorile* (1993), they expressed a cosy populism in which culture lay in the blood of Italians and the soil of Italy. Such a revised culture duly fitted Berlusconi's announcement on Liberation Day (25 April 1994) that the conflict between Fascism and anti-fascism was over and that Italy had moved into an entirely new era. In the eyes of Berlusconi and his supporters, anti-anti-fascism had then become the governing ideology.

The defeat of Berlusconi in the 1996 elections brought the Left to national political power. Supporters of the **Ulivo** coalition on occasion still express the ideas and attitudes of anti-fascism. However, the ambiguous metaphor of the olive is a good indication of how current Italian politics have lost their old certainties. Anti-fascism is the most evident of these weakened ideals.

See also: Gramsci; intellectuals

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R.J.B.BOSWORTH

Antonacci, Anna

b. 5 April 1961, Ferrara

Soprano

Anna Antonacci's passionate stage presence and dark-hued voice have ensured her success as one of Italy's leading **opera** singers. After initial studies in Bologna she gave an accomplished stage debut as Rosina in Arezzo in 1986. In 1988 she was the winner of the Pavarotti Prize, and subsequently launched a career that has centred on the eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century repertoire, with especial strengths in Rossini. She has performed in all the leading Italian opera houses, returning regularly to Rome, Bologna and Catania, and has also appeared with success in Philadelphia and London. Notable roles include Semiramide, Ermione, Elizabeth (*Maria Stuarda*), Elfrida (*Paisiello*) and Fiordiligi. She has been active in the revival of lesser-known operas, taking the part of Horatia in Cimarosa's *Gli Orazi ed i Curiazi* which was given at Rome and Lisbon in 1989.

JOHN KERSEY

Antonioni, Michelangelo

b. 29 September 1912, Ferrara

Film director, scriptwriter, short story writer and critic

Considered one of the principal *auteurs* of the modernist movement, Antonioni is known in Italy for a string of early films in the realist style. From the 1960s onwards he made

more formalist films both in Italian and in English, with international casts. His reputation as one of the leading directors of world repute grew as his subject matter shifted increasingly towards a representation of individual alienation within a context of global politics.

Educated in economics and business at the University of Bologna, he worked as a film critic for *Corriere Padano* before moving to Rome in 1938 and joining the journal *Cinema*, while also briefly studying film-making at the **Centre Sperimentale di Cinematografia**. In the early 1940s he collaborated on the screenplays of **Rossellini's** *Un pilota ritorna* (A Pilot Returns) (1942) and Marcel Carné's *Les Visiteurs du soir* (Evening Visitors) (1942). His first film, *Gente del Po* (People of the Po), a documentary on the Po valley, was begun in 1943 but, hindered by Fascist censorship and the war, was not released until 1947. In the immediate postwar period he made several more documentaries and collaborated on the screenplays of **De Santis's** *Caccia tragica* (Tragic Hunt) (1947), and **Fellini's** *Lo sceicco bianco* (The White Sheik) (1952). Finally in 1950 he released his first feature, *Cronaca di un amore* (Story of a Love Affair), a conventional narrative involving love and adultery but already strongly marked by his formal style.

At a time when Italy was rebuilding from the war (see **postwar reconstruction**) and **neorealism** was propelling directors such as Rossellini to international status, Antonioni took the neorealist interest in characters at the edge to extremes which, while earning critical respect—although often voiced with a certain puzzlement at the lack of clear meanings—at the same time also attracted occasional official censure and disdain within the industry itself. His 1952 film *I vinti* (The Vanquished) presented criminal behaviour in too graphic a manner for both the Italian government and the French authorities, who refused to allow the film to be shown in France for the next ten years. In his next film, *La signora senza camelia* (The Lady Without Camelias) (1953), Antonioni focussed on the industry's own exploitative treatment of women, a theme which would recur throughout his career. An early manifestation of his later preoccupation with the theme of alienation appeared in his characterization of the working class in his native Po valley in *Il grido* (The Cry) of 1957.

By the end of the 1950s his neorealist style was evolving towards films with more disjointed narratives. Rejecting the superficial imposed coherence of Hollywood-style composition, plot and editing, he produced what would remain his most successful films: *L'avventura* (The Adventure) (1960), *La notte* (The Night) (1961), *L'eclisse* (The Eclipse) (1962), and his first film in colour, *Deserto rosso* (The Red Desert) (1964), which marked his maturation as a major film-maker. As he continued to explore the failure, or indeed the impossibility, of human intimacy and a deepening sense of social alienation, particularly that of women, within postwar Europe, Antonioni developed a personal and highly formal style to match his disjointed and alienated subject matter. Thus, in spite of an increasing international reputation and good box office success, his films continued to strike most critics as ambiguous and uncertain.

In 1966 he made *Blow-Up*, set in the mid-1960s Carnaby Street and depicting life in the hip London of British photographer David Bailey. His first film in English, it made the reputations of its English actors, Vanessa Redgrave and David Hemmings, and brought Antonioni himself into the international spotlight. It set the trend for the next decade or so, and from 1967 to 1982 Antonioni made his films outside Italy. Existential

alienation gave way to more specific themes of late twentieth-century life, in particular a preoccupation with surveillance and the epistemology of vision. 'How is it that we know the real?' became an increasingly dominant subtext in films that concerned themselves with the problems of seeing and knowing, and of how the artist represents them within their political context. Critical acclaim, though often still puzzled, followed and there were more box office successes. Major films from this period are *Zabriskie Point* (1969), set in California, and *Professions: Reporter* (1975, titled for English audiences as *The Passenger*), which starred Jack Nicholson, both of which attempt to explore the problems of middle-class identity allied to political action.

In 1972 he returned to documentary, shooting *Chung-Kuo Cina* in China for the **RAI**. Admired in the West, it earned him yet more political flak, this time from the Chinese government which did not appreciate its openness. Experimentation with colour and video technology resulted in *Il mistero di Oberwald* (The Oberwald Mystery) (1980) but he soon returned to his earlier subjects of middle-class social alienation and the problems of intimacy in his *Identificazione di una donna* (Identification of a Woman) (1982). Other projects were planned, but from the mid-1980s his health began failing and most remained unrealized. A stroke in the late 1980s left him without speech, but in 1995, with the assistance of German film-maker Wim Wenders, he made *Par-delà des nuages* (Beyond the Clouds), a film based on some of his own short stories. Among many awards, including Cannes (1982) and Venice (1983), he was awarded an Oscar for lifetime achievement in 1995.

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JEFF DOYLE

Arbasino, Alberto

b. 22 January 1930, Voghera, Pavia

Writer and cultural critic

Among the most versatile intellectuals and caustic critics of Italy's cultural, political and social life—see such essay collections as *Fantasmî italiani* (Italian Ghosts) (1977) and *Un paese senza* (A Country Without) (1980)—Arbasino was also a founding and prominent member of the neoavantgarde Gruppo 63. He left his professorship at the University of Rome to devote himself to literature, journalism (regularly contributing to *La Repubblica*) and to politics (he sat in **Parliament** as a deputy for the Republican Party from 1983 to 1987). In his numerous novels—parodies and pastiches such as *L'anonimo lombardo* (The Anonymous Lombard) (1959), *Specchio delle mie brame* (Mirror of My Yearnings) (1974) and *Fratelli d'Italia* (Brothers of Italy) (2nd revised edition, 1993)—Arbasino inventively plays with language to both record and sarcastically comment on the chaotic reality of contemporary Italy.

See also: narrative

FRANCESCA PARMEGGIANI

Arbore, Renzo

b. 24 June 1937, Foggia

Musician, film-maker, radio and television presenter

Italy's most famous and multi-talented showman, Lorenzo (Renzo) Arbore began his showbusiness career playing clarinet with the South Railway Travellers, a group that performed dixieland music for American soldiers in Naples immediately after the War. After having moved to Rome in the 1960s, he began to work for **RAI** Radio and created the first of his many innovative and extremely popular music programmes, *Bandiera gialla* (Yellow Flag), in 1965. This was followed in 1970 by *Alto Gradimento* (High Approval), a show that was similarly successful and which ran uninterrupted until 1980. By this time Arbore had already moved into television and had achieved even greater popularity with the legendary Sunday variety programme, *L'altra domenica* (Another Side of Sunday). After trying his hand at cinema and directing several amusing films which, although not spectacularly successful, nevertheless showcased a number of rising young talents including Diego Abatantuono, Roberto **Benigni** and writer Luciano De Crescenzo, Arbore returned to radio with *Radio anche noi* (We're Also Radio) in 1981. Already something of a showbusiness legend among the initiated, Arbore would become a household name throughout Italy in 1985 with *Quelli della notte* (The Night Crowd), a zany late-night music and talk show which ran five nights a week for only two and a half months but which profoundly changed the face of Italian television and marked

something of a revolution in Italian popular culture. At its height, the programme achieved an unprecedented 51 per cent share of the total television viewing audience and many of the oddball characters who regularly appeared on the show achieved enough fame to subsequently host their own programmes as part of the diaspora of what became known the Arbore tribe'.

The clever parody of television shows which had made *Quelli della notte* such a hit was repeated in a new guise in several new programmes that followed, the most famous of which was *Indietro Tutta* (All Behind) in 1988. At the same time Arbore continued to pursue his musical career, competing with his clarinet at the **Sanremo Festival** in 1986 where he was placed second. After touring Italy with the Balilla Boogie Band in the late 1980s, he achieved a much wider international recognition in the early 1990s when he toured Australia and the Americas with his Orchestra Italiana (The Italian Orchestra), a large and eclectic ensemble which played unusual but ingenious arrangements of well-known Italian popular songs. In the mid-1990s he became artistic director of RAI International and became even better known worldwide as the public face of the RAI's satellite broadcasts.

GINO MOLITERNO

Arca, Paolo

b. 12 May 1953, Rome

Composer

Area studied at the Rome Conservatory with Irma Ravinale and subsequently with Donatoni in Rome and Siena. His compositional style is direct and accessible and shows a strong theatrical instinct. He won a composition prize at Avignon in 1982, and has since been noted for his dramatic collaborations with the librettist Giovanni Carli Ballola. This partnership yielded the one-act opera, *Angelica e la luna* (Angelica and the Moon) (1985), based on an Italian folk-tale, and its successor *Il Carillon del Gesuita* (The Jesuit's Carillon) (1989), written to commemorate the bicentenary of the French Revolution. This latter work is concerned with the fate of the boy Dauphin (the son of Louis XVI) and develops from a realistic treatment of the drama to one of increasing magic and fantasy. At the 1990 Munich Festival, Area was commissioned by Henze to write an opera for marionettes. The resulting work, *Lucius, Asinus Aureus* (to a libretto based on Apuleius) shows Arca's commitment to the perpetuation of established forms while renewing their intellectual and musical language.

JOHN KERSEY

Archibugi, Francesca

b. 16 May 1960, Rome

Scriptwriter and film director

Archibugi studied film-making at **Olmi's** school at Bassano and later at the **Centre Sperimentale di Cinematografia** in Rome. The few short films she directed there brought her to the critics' attention as one of the most interesting minimalist directors of the 1980s. In 1988 she reached a larger audience with her first feature *Mignon è partita* (Mignon Has Gone), a delicately wrought film about the first-love experiences of a sensitive, middle-class Roman teenager.

A keen observer and a subtle psychologist, Archibugi conserves the strong influence of her mentors Ermanno Olmi, Gianni Amico and Furio Scarpelli (see **Age and Scarpelli**) in both her scriptwriting and direction. Feature films such as *Verso sera* (In the Evening) (1990), the highly-praised *Il grande cocomero* (The Great Pumpkin) (1992) and more recently *L'albero delle pere* (The Pear Tree) (1998) all confirm her ability to hold the audience while dealing with unusual and intimate themes.

ADRIANA MONTI

architectural and design magazines

The uniqueness of the Italian postwar architectural and design scene was fully reflected in the proliferation of magazines dealing with design-related themes. Architectural training underpinned so many areas alongside urban and architectural design, including product and fashion design, furniture, transport, packaging and graphic design, that it came to constitute the major characteristic of Italian design culture, and this situation inevitably manifested itself in the magazines. Although it was the scarcity of architectural work, combined with the overproduction of architectural graduates, that drove architects to explore other areas during this early period, architect-designers would continue to be the leading figures in Italian design from the First Generation onwards.

There were few architectural and design magazines in the prewar period. Marcello Piacentini's *L'Architettura* (1921–41) was founded in Rome as a conservative architectural history magazine, but soon developed into a mouthpiece of Fascist architecture. With the advent of *Domus* (1928) followed by *Casabella*, *Poligono*, *Edilizia Moderna* (1939) and later *Quadrante* (1933–5), which all regularly reviewed new projects and materials, Milan was established as the main centre of both design studios and related publishing activities. In fact, the founding of *Domus* and *Casabella* signals a new era in the history of modern Italian design. Passing through various directors and editorial policies, they nevertheless always maintained the highest standard as leading magazines of the profession and set the tone for the resulting professional debates. Members of the First Generation of designers such as **Giò Ponti**, the **BPR Studio** and

Carlo **Mollino** established themselves in the first half of the century and would continue to make an impact in the postwar period but, in general, the war years themselves saw very little design magazine production. The exceptions were *Lo stile* (full title: *Lo stile nella casa e nell'arredamento* (Style in House and Furnishings), which Ponti founded in 1941 and edited until resuming the directorship of *Domus* from **Rogers** in 1947 (*Lo stile* itself dissolved in 1967) and the antifascist *Quaderni italiani* which, beginning in 1942, was edited by Bruno **Zevi** and published in London and then smuggled into Italy.

Among the magazines founded immediately after the war, a central role was taken by Rome-based *Metron*, which became the mouthpiece of Zevi's APAO (Association for Organic Architecture) and a focal point for intellectuals like **Piccinato**, Musatti and Radiconcini and architects such as **Ridolfi**, Figini, Peressuti and Tedeschi. Programmatically directed towards the promotion of organicism and the international style, it was formed in opposition to the old elites and consequently advocated the uncompromising erasure of all traces of the rationalist aesthetic and its politics. It continued from 1955 onwards as *l'Architettura, cronache e storia*, and in the 1980s became equally critical of postmodernism. Postwar *Casabella* published special issues subtitled 'Costruzioni' (Constructions), directed by **Albini** and Palanti: the first (no. 193) was on the theme of Reconstruction, the second (no. 194) was on the 'Piano AR' (The AR Plan) and the last one (no. 195–98) was devoted to Pagano. However the series was soon discontinued as unprofitable. Guided by the enlightened social thinker and industrialist Adriano **Olivetti**, *Comunità* (1946) and the Turin-based *Urbanistica* (1949) attempted to address a professional audience whilst at the same time widening the scope of discussion by calling attention to the underdeveloped South and advocating intervention at the urban level inspired by English Garden Cities and Mumford's ideas. The late 1940s were generally characterized by a number of smaller, ephemeral periodicals of differing ideological stances. Elio **Vittorini's** influential leftist *Il Politecnico*, graphically designed by Albe Steiner in the neo-constructivist style, led a brief but notorious existence between September 1945 and December 1947. In Florence, beginning in 1945, **Michelucci** edited *La nuova città*, focusing particularly on the problems of urbanism. *Pirelli*, promoted by Linoleum, came out from 1947 to 1972 as a monthly review of cultural information. Also worthy of mention is *A, Cultura della Vita*, a weekly popularized by Zevi, Pagani and Lina Bò, which however for only lasted a few issues in 1946. There also appeared De Finetti's *La città, architettura e politica* and *Cantieri*, which dealt with technical themes and building policies.

The years of reconstruction, the 1950s, saw a vast multiplication of magazines, some highly specialized, attesting to the existence of a sophisticated audience both professional and lay. This also reflected the strengthening of the economy as well as a stratification within the field of design itself. In Rome, Luigi **Moretti** started the sadly short-lived yet beautiful *Spazio* in 1950. *Edilizia Moderna*, although a mouthpiece of the Linoleum Pirelli from 1929, was also 'refounded' in Milan in 1950. *Prospettive*, launched a year later, and *Architetti* were both addressed to professional architects. Promoted by the glass manufacture Saint-Gobain, the specialized *Vitrum* also started in 1950. *Civiltà delle macchine*, edited by Leonardo **Sinigalli**, appeared in Turin in 1953 as a house organ of the Finmeccanica company. Together with *Edilizia Moderna*, it expressed the critical views of the design intelligentsia of the time. Alberto **Rosselli** started the enormously influential bilingual (Italian/English) *Stile Industria*, completely dedicated to the

promotion of mass-produced object design. It only ran from 1954 to 1963, but was reissued in June 1997. Its concentration on visual detail helped to raise the most banal utilitarian objects to the status of art, and was a vital force in establishing the international reputation of Italian design both aesthetically and theoretically. *Rivista dell'arredamento* was launched in 1954; under the direction of Antonello Vincenti, it became *Interni* in 1967. *Zodiac* was another periodical with a high cultural impact, originally founded by Adriano Olivetti in 1957 and then revived in 1989. *Il Mobile Italiano* (1957–60) and *Ideal Standard* (Milan, 1959) focused on interiors, while *La Casa* (Rome, 1955–61), directed by Pio Montesi, was a monographic magazine of architectural criticism which provided some of the first studies of twentieth-century Italian architecture with themes such as 'Quartiere' (urban block) and 'Italian Modern Architecture'. Many other journals dealing with private, interior and exterior spaces came out in Gorlich editions. *Ville e giardini*, from 1956, was directed at a larger, non-specialized audience.

The **Milan Triennale**, the **Venice Biennale** and *la Mostra del Cinema*, now elevated to high culture, were closely followed and debated as major seasonal cultural events in many periodicals that promoted design as a cultural force, especially *Stile Industria*.

The production of design periodicals continued to flourish throughout the 1960s when a whole range of new magazines appeared. *Abitare* (Milan, 1960) and *Interni* (1967) exhibited the sumptuousness of Italian neo-modern interiors while *Casa Vogue* (Milan, 1968), edited until 1993 by Isa Vercelloni, was the first magazine dealing with the radical and the postmodern not addressed exclusively to professionals. *Ottagono* (Milan, 1966) was issued as a general design magazine supported by such major design manufacturers as Artemide, Bernini, Boffi, Cassina, Flos and Tecno. *Rassegna* (Milan, 1966) published important issues under the editorship first of Adalberto De Lago (from 1968) and then, after moving to Bologna, under Vittorio **Gregotti** (1979). *Controspazio* (Milan, 1969) led by Paolo **Portoghesi**, *Contropiano* (Rome, 1968) and *Lotus* (Milan, 1964–5), and later *Lotus International* (winter 1970–1), directed by Pierluigi Nicolini, provided valuable alternatives to the hegemony of *Domus* and redirected attention to the interrelation of architecture, urbanism and social issues. Many of the 'house organs' appeared, including *Marmo*, a beautiful magazine sponsored by S.Henreaux SpA and directed by Bruno Alfieri from 1963; *Caleidoscopio* (1965), a house organ of Gruppo Industriale Busnelli; and *Qualità* of Kartell. *Pianeta Fresco* came out with two issues in 1967, edited by Ettore **Sottsass** and Fernanda Pivano, dealing with pop art and beat culture. Of the other magazines, the most popular were *La Mia Casa*, *Shop Casa & Giardino*, *Forme*, *Humus*, *Ufficio Stile*, *Ville Giardini*, *Marcatré*, *Metro*, *Argomenti di Architettura*, *Il Quadrifoglio* and *Stile Auto*.

The political and social upheaval of the late 1960s resulted in a disillusionment with the social power of design on the part of both younger and older generations of designers and the crisis carried on into the 1970s. At the same time, this fostered a new architectural awareness in the profession and important theoretical works were produced. The tension between the social context and the aesthetics of isolated and idealized objects needed redefinition, but much of the resulting critical 'radicalness' and 'newness' represented highly intellectualized and conceptualized diagnoses of problems rather than their solutions. Probably the most influential magazine of those years was *Modo* (Milan, 1977), directed first by **Mellini**, then by Franco Raggi, Andrea **Branzi** and Cristina Morozzi. It proposed repositioning design within a larger technical and social milieu by

connecting it with anthropology, social customs, industrial techniques and craftsmanship. Another journal aiming to shift architectural, design and social co-ordinates was *Spazio e società* (Milan, 1978) edited and directed by Giancarlo **De Carlo**. *IN: Argomenti e Immagini del Design* (Milan, 1971–4) was a review dedicated to radical design, as was *Op Cit*, a quarterly edited in Naples by Renato de Fusco and supported by Alessi, the Neapolitan Chamber of Commerce, Drieade, Golden Shave and Sabatini. The Paduan *Quaderni del Progetto*, with two issues (1974, 1979) financed by Paolo Deganello, debated the relationship between politics and design. A number of journals like *L'ambiente cucina* (1970) and *Il bagno oggi e domani* (1973) initiated a series of similarly specialized periodicals which included *In più* and *Psicon*.

The 1980s brought another crisis in design but also a further diversification of architecture and design periodicals which mirrored the growing complexity of Italian society. Florentine Radical design, embodied in **Studio Alchimia** (1978) and the Memphis movement (1981–87) (see **Studio Memphis**, capitalized on the notion of design as figurative communication, and the magazines formed around them expressed the theories and aesthetics of the New Design. Exemplary is *Terrazzo* (1988), directed by Barbara Radice (in consultation with Ettore Sottsass), in many ways a refined mirror of the cultural movements that followed design, anthropology, history and the post-industrial metropolis. *Olo*, a house organ of Mendini, was issued as a quarterly. *Area*, *L'arca*, *Arredo Urbano* and *CAD* all came out in 1981, followed by *Gapcasa*, *Recuperare*, *Abacus*, *Habitat Ufficio* and *Vetro spazio* (1985) and *Disegno* (1986). *Quaderni*, a quarterly on architecture culture founded in 1989, attracted the collaboration of Bruno **Munari** while *Materia* (1989), a quarterly of architecture and design, appeared as a house organ of Graniti delle Fiandre.

The Fourth Generation of architect-designers developed from diverse influences of the Third Generation. From the Sottsass/Mendini 'school' come Aldo Cibic, De Lucchi, Thun, Zanini and Christoph Radl; Luca Scacchetti shares a sensibility with **Rossi**; Maurizio Peregalli represents the word of high fashion, primarily **Armani**; Denis Santachiara, Luigi Serafini and Mario Conventino are inspired by visual arts; Capelli, Ranzo and Giuseppe D'Amore (based in Naples) find inspiration in 'Mediterranean design'; Laura de Santillana cultivates the crafts approach; Alberto Meda stands for the poetics of engineering in design; furniture and industrial/artisan traditions groomed Antonio Citterio, Forcolani and Paolo Pallucco. The Bolidist Movement, which appeared in 1986, is recognizable by its streamlined forms and computerized cartoon images (as in work of Massimo Iosa-Ghini and Maurizio Corrado). Its celebration of speed and smoothness of technology, as well as of mental and physical mobility, brings it close to the futurist inspiration.

In the 1990s, Italian design inevitably became more 'global'. As both design and architecture became obsessed with computerization, the magazines became 'intelligent', computerized and 'virtual', in both their 'packaging' and their themes. Although the greater number of leading Fourth Generation Italian designers still have an architectural degree, architecture seems to have lost its privileged cultural status. New titles appeared, including *Elle Decor*, *Axa*, *Progex*, *Exporre*, *d'A* and *Polaris*. Needless to say, by the mid-1990s every 'self-respecting' magazine had a homepage on the World Wide Web.

See also: design education; industrial design; interior design; Movimento di Comunità

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GORDANA KOSTICH

L'Architettura, cronache e storia

The architectural journal *L'Architettura, cronache e storia* (Architecture, Chronicles and History) was widely regarded as an extension of the Roman journal *Metron*, the mouthpiece of the APAO (Association for Organic Architecture) founded by Bruno Zevi in 1944. *L'Architettura* itself was launched by Zevi in Rome in 1955 as a magazine 'for the history of art and architecture'. It continues to be published under his direction, although it has lost some of its original enthusiasm for a radical socio-political transformation of architecture. As well as regularly documenting building activities in Italy and abroad, *L'Architettura*'s programme has aspired to present the widest range of architectural interests including matters political and artistic, professional and historical, contemporary and traditional. It has constantly attempted to bridge the gap between modern architecture and architectural historiography, an issue it addressed in its inaugural editorial and which it characterized as a schism that had already proved disastrous from a cultural point of view.

See also: architectural and design magazines

GORDANA KOSTICH

Archizoom

An experimental, avantgarde design studio, Archizoom Associati specialized in industrial and architectural design and in **urban planning**, creating a number of visionary environments and fantasy furniture designs. Established in Florence in 1966 by architects Andrea **Branzi**—the theoretical leader—Gilberto Coretti, Paolo Deganello and Massimo Morozzi, the studio was joined two years later by industrial designers Dario and Lucia Bartolini. The group was similar to another Florentine studio, **Superstudio**, founded around the same time on similar principles and led by Adolfo **Natalini**. Like Superstudio, Archizoom was partly inspired by British Conceptual Design and *Archigram*. Its aesthetics demanded a reform of design that would enhance consumers' awareness of both objects and architecture; to achieve this goal, members often produced ironical and mischievous projects, especially in their furniture designs, with playful allusions to the modern movement as well as to kitsch, pop and stylistic revivalism. Archizoom's project for the standard polyurethane foam sofa, *Superonda* (1966), a two-piece sectional divan with a sinusoidal silhouette, was a paradigm of 'counter-design'. As an ironic response to Le Corbusier's famous injunction to clean up lounges and lives, Archizoom proposed a Safari sofa and palm-shaped Sanremo standing lamp with illuminating leaves (1968). The 'Mies chair', produced by Poltrona in 1969, was their commentary on the classical modernist armchair, and consisted of a stretch-rubber membrane supported by a triangular chromium frame. Their 'dream bed' *Presagio di Rose* (Presage of Roses) (1967) challenged the traditional understanding of good taste with its wilful and hard-edged, neokitsch vulgarity.

Archizoom's involvement with architecture was equally radical, and here too the studio argued against tradition, familiarity and comfort, and what they regarded as the 'anti-humanism of modernism'. Together with Superstudio, Archizoom organized the 'Superarchitecture' exhibition in Pistoia and in Modena in 1966–7. They also exhibited at Eurodomus in Turin and Teatro Domani in Modena (1968), in the 'Center for Eclectic Conspiracy' at the 14th **Milan Triennale**, at Milan's Salone del Mobile (Furniture Showroom). In 1970 they presented their famous 'No-stop City', which extended the idea of a city into infinity. In 1972, the exhibition 'Italy: The New Domestic Landscape' at New York's MoMA, brought international attention to Italian radical design and, with typical bravura, in the 'Counterdesign as Postulation' section, Archizoom presented an empty, grey room in which a female voice vividly described a wonderful, illuminated and colourful house which the audience was left to imagine for itself.

Archizoom dissolved in 1974, and Branzi went to work in **Studio Alchimia** with Ettore **Sottsass**, Alessandro **Mendini** and the UFO group, and later, for the more commercial **Studio Memphis**, again with Mendini. The spirit of Archizoom and its anti-design postulates thus continued to influence design aesthetics well into the 1980s and 1990s. The Archizoom archives are housed at the University of Parma's Institute for the History of Art.

See also: industrial design

Further reading

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GORDANA KOSTICH

ARCI

A non-profit organization which operates primarily at the local level, ARCI (Associazione Ricreativa Culturale Italiana, the Italian Recreational and Cultural Association) works in conjunction with local administrations to provide Italians with leisure activities. In its statement of purpose, ARCI promotes ‘the values of tolerance, brotherhood, solidarity and community, to foster the growth of each individual through active participation within society’.

The association is particularly active in the field of culture and entertainment, where its principal activity is the promotion of books, movies and music which might otherwise be neglected by mainstream mass-media. It organizes physical education and sporting events that encourage participation rather than competition, and strives to provide environments for group activities for young people that are safe and intellectually stimulating. ARCI was also one of the first organizations to openly discuss and advocate homosexual rights in Italy.

PAOLO VILLA

Argan, Giulio Carlo

17 May 1909, Turin; d. 12 November 1992, Rome

Art historian and critic

Argan was interested in art as a form of social engagement, integral and necessary to life. He identified architecture and **urban planning** as areas where the community has a particularly strong interaction with culture. His major works, which tend to emphasize the social context of art, range from studies of Renaissance painters and architects, including Botticelli, Fra Angelico, Michelangelo, Serlio and Palladio, through the Baroque to modern sculpture and abstract art. He stimulated much debate in 1963 with his discussion of the ‘death of art’, by which he meant the end of the creative autonomy of the individual.

Argan moved from academic posts at Palermo and the University of Rome to the world of politics, first serving as Mayor of Rome between 1976 and 1979 and later becoming a senator for the Communist Party.

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MAX STAPLES

Argento, Dario

b. 7 September 1940, Rome

Film director

The son of a film producer, Argento began his career as a film critic and a scriptwriter for Bernardo **Bertolucci** and then Sergio **Leone**, co-writing the internationally successful spaghetti Western *C'era una volta il West* (Once Upon a Time in the West) (1968). With films like *L'uccello dalle piume di cristallo* (The Gallery Murders) (1970) and *Profondo rosso* (Deep Red) (1975), Argento contributed significantly to the revival of the Italian B-movie horror genre, which is highly original and strongly influenced by local adventure film and Italian comic book traditions (see **comics**). Argento's *Suspiria* (1977) with its breakdown of conventional narrative and elements of baroque sensibility, represented a turning point for the genre.

Argento has been a producer and a mentor for younger directors working in the horror genre (such as Lamberto Bava's daughter Asia, who starred in his American production *Trauma* (1993), and has become a successful screen actress).

LAURENCE SIMMONS

Armani, Giorgio

b. 11 July 1934, Piacenza

Fashion designer

Armani is acclaimed both for establishing power dressing for executive women and for the unstructured aesthetic of the 1980s, which simultaneously offered simplicity,

flexibility and elegance for both men and women. He did this using luxurious fabrics in muted tones, while resisting abrupt fashion change.

Armani began his career as a stylist for Rinascente stores, before becoming a designer at Cerruti in 1960 and then a freelance designer in 1970. He produced his own men's wear line in 1974, followed by a women's collection a year later, to international acclaim. Emporio Armani and Armani Jeans came in 1981, and diffusion ranges, accessories and an extensive network of retail outlets followed. Armani has been central to the rise of Italian fashion in the international marketplace, and has continued to expand his business and to exert a strong influence on the cosmopolitan wardrobe.

See also: fashion

NICOLA WHITE

armed forces

After the Second World War, the role of the armed forces in Italy was drastically reduced. A number of factors contributed to this reduction, including the prior involvement of the armed forces with Fascism (see also **fascism and neo-fascism**), the total collapse of the Royal Army after the fall of Mussolini, the legacy of a lost war, the hostility of the main **political parties** towards nationalism and militarism, and above all the rejection of war as a means of settling international disputes explicitly written into the **constitution** of 1948. At the same time, the armed forces retained their special status as a separate body, and although the constitution called in very general terms for their 'democratization', their integration into the democratic process has remained incomplete. The armed forces have remained under the jurisdiction of a separate military judiciary, which has continued to enforce autonomous military laws even in peace time. The Ministry of Defence—which gradually co-ordinated the three formerly divided forces of army, air force and navy—has continued to enjoy a relative autonomy from both government and the **Parliament**, and the Consiglio Supremo di Difesa (Supreme Defence Council), established in 1950 as a joint political body, has never exercised any effective power. Even the military budget is usually drafted in relative secrecy and has remained virtually free from control of Parliament.

The main source of legitimization of the armed forces has thus been international rather than national. After Italy joined NATO in 1949, the Italian army was permitted to rearm and to station a number of contingents within the Atlantic security forces. The USA was granted military bases on Italian soil, where, since 1958, the Italian government has allowed the deployment of nuclear missiles. Military industry was also relaunched by both state and private concerns (such as **Fiat** and **IRI**), which developed successful joint ventures in high-tech sectors with both US and European industrial groups.

Doubts about the Army's commitment to the democratic process arose during the 1960s and 1970s, when high-ranking military personnel were discovered to have been involved in a series of destabilising plots jointly carried out by subversive right-wing groups and sectors of the **intelligence services** (see **strategia della tensione**), a mistrust increased by the large number of generals revealed to have been members of the secret

Masonic Lodge **P2** in 1981 and the uncovering of the **Gladio** affair in 1990. Further severe damage to the public image of the armed forces resulted when a commercial airliner was shot down on 27 June 1980 above the island of **Ustica** in the Tyrrhenian sea, with the loss of eighty-one lives. In spite of strong suspicions that the plane had become unwittingly caught up in an air battle—allegedly between NATO or French forces and Libyan aircraft—and accidentally hit by a missile, the Italian Air Force refused to release information and tampered with radar records, thus actively obstructing investigations and leading to a number of charges being laid against some Chiefs of the General Staff and several other officers in 1990.

All of these events further eroded public trust in the armed forces. Moreover, the army is almost unanimously considered to be a gigantic and extremely costly bureaucratic machine, plagued by inefficiency and, as a number of judicial enquiries have uncovered, in some cases corruption. A military career is commonly regarded as an opportunity for occupational security, another form of safe bureaucratic employment, and the number of both officers and non-commissioned officers has continued to increase, reaching almost 90,000 in the early 1990s; only 20,000 of these are on active duty. Military service has continued to be compulsory for all persons of age (18 years at present) and the armed forces continue to call up a very large number of conscripts (up to 300,000 at the mid-1970s, gradually reduced to 210,000 twenty years later), although the period of service has been progressively shortened from two years to fifteen months in 1964, then to one year in 1975 and finally to ten months in the mid-1990s. Compulsory service for men—women were never conscripted, though recently a small number have been allowed into military training at their own request—was once considered a duty which contributed to the maintenance of the democratic process. However, military service is now largely regarded, especially by young people, as a waste of time and a meaningless obligation. A high number of suicides and revelations of the widespread use of intimidation and violence against recruits have further weakened the army's reputation to the point where increasingly a larger number of young people have opted to carry out their duty for national service through civilian service, either under social service organizations or in public administrations. This alternative, allowed for the first time in 1978, originally sought to deter many so-called 'obiettori di coscienza' (conscientious objectors) by obliging them to serve for twenty months, but the term was eventually brought into line with the period of military service.

Nevertheless, there is also wide acknowledgement of the socially useful functions performed by the army in providing support during natural disasters such as **earthquakes** or floods or a military presence in some southern towns (such as Naples and Palermo) as a deterrent against **mafia** and other organized crime. Some argue, however, that this merely highlights the absence of a proper civil defence and the chronic shortage of police personnel. Moreover, since the 1970s both the air force and the navy—along with some specialized corps of the army—have largely benefited from larger investments for modernization of equipment and armaments and gained greater technological expertise. Italian special contingents also took part successfully in some peacekeeping and peaceenforcing missions of the United Nations, such as those in the Sinai, Lebanon and the Persian Gulf during the 1980s, and more recently in Somalia (1992), the former Yugoslavia (1996) and Kosovo (1999). The Italian Air Force also participated in the Gulf War in 1990–1, the first time Italian armed forces have been deployed in military

operations since the end of the Second World War, and in the air strikes on Serbia in 1999. As a result the idea of a professional army made up exclusively of volunteers has gained momentum in recent years, to such an extent that a bill to abolish military service and create a professional army was announced by the D'Alema government in early 1999, with the proposal receiving widespread public support.

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STEFANO BATTILOSSI

Arpino, Giovanni

b. 27 January 1927, Pola; d. 10 December 1987, Turin

Novelist and editorial adviser

Giovanni Arpino first appeared on the literary scene in 1952 with the novel *Sei stato felice, Giovanni* (You Have Been Happy, Giovanni), followed by *La suora giovane* (The Young Nun) (1959). This successful novel—the diary of a middle-aged man recounting his love for a religious novice—was highly praised by the poet Eugenio Montale as one of the finest examples of Italian realist narrative.

Arpino investigated social and psychological themes in all his works, from *L'ombra delle colline* (Shadow of the Hill)—which was awarded the Strega Prize in 1964 (see **literary prizes**)—to his later *Il fratello italiano* (The Italian Brother) (1980) and the posthumously published *La trappola amorosa* (The Love Trap) (1988). Besides writing fiction (including children's literature) and several plays, Arpino contributed to a number of periodicals and was also editorial adviser for the publishing houses **Einaudi**, **Zanichelli** and **Mondadori**. His writing always displays a penetrating insight into reality while preserving political autonomy and freedom of thought.

See also: narrative

FRANCESCA PARMEGGIANI

art criticism

The function of the art critic is in part journalistic—to record what is happening in the art world like any other news—and in part commercial—to give an opinion which serves to advise the reader about attending exhibitions, or buying artworks. In Italy, the art market

and the exhibition and museum structure are vast. Government plays a substantial role in the presentation, conservation and promotion of the visual arts in recognition of their economic and social importance, and many people visit Italy specifically to look at works of art. However, most of the attention is on the art of the past. There is no 'arts council' type of government financial support for contemporary artists, and few tourists travel to Italy with the intention of viewing recent works. This is reflected in Italian newspapers and magazines, which carry regular sections on literature, music, and cinema but deal much more sporadically with the visual arts; when they do, Italian contemporary art is the poor relation which must jostle for attention with more popular art of the past or from other countries. If one also considers that artists are in commercial competition with each other, the intense nature of much postwar art criticism, with critics attempting to direct a limited limelight upon their own favoured players, becomes understandable, and it is significant that much art criticism has appeared outside the regular press, in the form of manifestos, catalogue essays or books.

Until the Second World War, Italian art criticism was philosophical and largely grounded in aesthetics. Fascism discouraged discussion of the content and meaning of works unless they happened to accord with government programmes. After the war there was intense debate about whether art should serve party political purposes and whether progressive styles implied progressive politics. At its crudest, this took the form of an argument between realists and abstractionists, with Communist Party leader Palmiro **Togliatti** condemning modern styles. Lionello **Venturi**, one of a number of writers who had originally made their mark as art historians, took the opposite view. One might have expected a political conservative to support a realist style, but Venturi's distaste for the state, and his belief in the individual, caused him to favour experimental forms of contemporary art. He was happy to trace a line of progress from his own beloved artists of the Renaissance through to the modernists of the 1950s, thus conferring artistic legitimacy on the latter.

Another concern, given the poor domestic economy at the time, was with seeking international attention and markets, which raised the question of whether this could best be done by employing a regional, a national or an international style. Venturi contributed to the international marketing of the unremarkable **Gruppo degli otto** by describing them as independents, free of petty political influence. Giulio Carlo **Argan**, on the other hand, argued for the need for Italian artists to replace their native traditions with a generic European modernity, while Cesare Brandi clung to the idea of a regional art, deriving from the characteristics of the northern Italian landscape.

Since modernism implies the idea of the avantgarde and a decisive break with the past, the attempts by historians-turned-critics to relate modern art to the past were not always successful. Furthermore, the styles of the 1950s and 1960s brought new values and techniques which could not be described in terms of traditional art history. If art did not aspire to 'beauty', but instead claimed to be descriptive of the artists and society that produced it, then art criticism needed the vocabularies of disciplines such as sociology, psychoanalysis and semiotics, and the next generation of Italian critics were, in fact, imaginative writers familiar with these languages.

The semiotic critics did not seek to judge the technical quality of an artwork, or describe its links to tradition. Instead, they sought to explain its semiotic functioning and levels of meaning. The *critica militante* ('militant' or 'engaged' criticism) was

progressive criticism intent on social change, and judged works on the basis of their political message. Critics again became personal sponsors of artists and movements. In 1961 Argan organized **Continuità** (Continuity); in 1967 Germano **Celant** recognized *arte povera*, and in 1979 Achille **Bonito Oliva** coined the term ‘**transavantgarde**’. In each case their criticism was unashamedly partizan, designed to promote the movement they had described.

After the 1960s the language of art criticism became more ‘artistic’ and harder to understand, in part because of its blending of a variety of discourses. At times it overshadowed the artwork itself. Post-structuralism recognized critical writing itself as an art, valuing the explanation in place of the thing. Certainly, critics seemed in no way beholden to the artist, or of lesser status. The journal *Flash Art* gave ample space to obscure metaphor, such as Bonito Oliva’s tortuous pronouncement:

The initial precept is that of art as the production of a catastrophe, a discontinuity that destroys the tectonic balance of language to favor a precipitation into the substance of the [imaginary], neither as a nostalgic return, nor as a reflux, but a flowing that drags inside itself the sedimentation of many things which exceed a simple return to the private and the simple.

(Bonito Oliva, 1990:62)

Other critics have spoken out against the dubious morality of the partizan review and the unintelligibility of much ‘artistic’ writing. Renato **Barilli** has noted that the *critica militante* leads to poor writing, because the critic is too close to the subject, is writing in haste and in brevity for a particular occasion, and too often takes on the role of defending the artist. Gillo **Dorfles** believes that Germano Celant concentrates on an explanation of the semiotic functioning of the work, at the expense of any judgements of value or taste. Federico **Zeri** has spoken of the need to balance formal, contextual, and aesthetic judgements of the work of art. In seeming to promote art, critics such as Celant and Bonito Oliva have succeeded in promoting themselves, to a point where they are far better known today than most living Italian artists.

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MAX STAPLES

art movements

In the postwar period, art in Italy has followed a course parallel to the developments in art elsewhere in Europe and the United States but with some unique features. Immediately after the Second World War, the USA eagerly embraced abstract expressionism. In Italy, however, realism had never achieved an official status under Fascism, and so it still retained some attraction and credibility. As a result, Italian art generally retained closer links with figuration and with the figurative tradition, and this provided it with a basis for moving beyond modernism in the 1980s through the innovations of the **transavantgarde**.

Art and Italy

In the second half of the twentieth century, art has tended to be international with the same styles appearing everywhere throughout the developed world and enjoying much the same fortunes. Museums of modern art, wherever they are situated, have all developed similar collections.

Italy, with close economic and cultural links to Europe and the Americas, has reflected international trends in the visual arts much more than it has driven them. The broad outline of the international history of art since the Second World War—abstract expressionism, minimalism, pop, conceptual art, neo-expressionism—applies to Italy as well, despite some minor difference in labels. There are, however, some important features specific to contemporary Italian art. One is the unavoidable influence of Italy's unique artistic heritage. Another is the extraordinary proliferation of artists' groups. In fact, it seems that little artistic action took place in Italy without those involved first forming a group and issuing a manifesto, although often this was all that the group did as a unit before its members quickly went their separate ways. A third unique feature is the importance of critics and curators in assembling groups of artists, giving them a title and explanation, and mounting an exhibition or writing a book about them. Lionello **Venturi** and Astratto-Concreto, Gillo **Dorfles** and the MAC, Carlo **Argan** and **Continuità**, Germano **Celant** and *arte povera*, and Achille **Bonito Oliva** and the transavantgarde are all examples of the crucial intervention of art historians and critics in the creation of the artistic phenomenon that they claimed to be discovering.

Unique artistic heritage

Italy has an artistic patrimony unlike that of any other country. It is a highly-developed country but it is also riddled with the remains of the past in the form of architectural ruins, museums such as the Uffizi and the Vatican, churches filled with sculpture, painting, and mosaic, and sculptures and fountains in public places. No Italian could avoid acquaintance with other periods and styles. This might be seen as both an advantage and a disadvantage. While it provides artists and the population at large with a wide education in art history, it also makes the country itself into a sort of museum, and

some artists have felt the past to be a dead weight from which it was necessary to escape in order to develop their own particular talents. Reacting to this dead weight of the past, in the early part of the twentieth century the Futurists suggested nothing less than the destruction of all museums and all art of the past.

Struggle of the styles

Postwar Italian art might be considered in terms of two broad styles, figurative and non-figurative, each of which may be further sub-divided. Figurative art uses recognizable shapes which represent objects, be they real or imaginary. In its realist mode, figurative art combines real objects in a naturalistic setting. Other figurative forms, such as surrealism or expressionism, may depict objects, but in a way which is not intended to be a representation of physical nature. They may be stylized or made partially abstract by devices such as unnatural colours, distortion of shapes, unnatural perspective or bizarre combinations of elements. Non-figurative art (often called abstract art) does not represent physical objects. Instead, it explores the expressive possibilities of colour and shape. It can be formal, in the sense that it uses regular shapes and composition, or informal, that is, free-flowing and spontaneous.

Broadly speaking, modern art abandoned realism, regarding straightforward representation as ‘artless’ or more properly the domain of photography. Instead it oscillated between non-figurative styles, which tended to quickly exhaust themselves, and stylized figurative styles, which placed some importance on subject matter.

In Russia, Germany, and the Americas, realism came to be poorly regarded after the 1930s, when it was used by governments of various hues for propaganda purposes. Its simple, easy-to-read style was regarded as the ideal means for communicating political messages to the masses. Hitler—to take only the most obvious example—openly derided abstract art and its complexity, characterizing it as the work of degenerate perverts and, in reaction, most politically progressive artists came to identify with modernism. There was, however, no such reaction in Italy. Under Fascism there was an official style of monumental architecture, and the Fascist government encouraged a great deal of vaguely neoclassical sculpture, exerting its influence through assigning commissions and organising art exhibitions. Significantly, however, Fascism never attempted to gain total control over art and various different artistic currents persisted under it so that, after the war, Italians did not automatically associate social realism with the art of the totalitarian state and modernism with freedom (see also **fascism and neo-fascism**). In Italy, both forms were available for use by ‘progressive’ artists, and it was individual artists who had enjoyed established careers under the Fascists, such as **de Chirico** and **Morandi**, who were somewhat discredited, rather than any particular styles.

The 1940s

The 1940s were marked by debate between the figurative and non-figurative camps. In the first years after the Second World War, artists in Rome, Milan, and Venice banded together in the *Fronte nuovo delle arti* (New Front of the Arts) which included such

diverse figures as Renato **Guttuso**, Emilio **Vedova**, Renato Birolli and Giulio Turcato, who represented quite different artistic trends. The only common denominator of the group was a past opposition to Fascism.

Argument soon arose, reflecting political orientations, and carried out in a spate of newspaper articles, pamphlets and books. Guttuso, the leading exponent of realism, was a staunch member of the Communist Party (see **PCI**) and followed the official party line which decreed that art should serve the class struggle. Other artists argued that art should be detached from politics, or that realism was not the best way to achieve socialist ends. Carla **Accardi**, Piero Dorazio and Giulio Turcato established the abstract Forma (Form) Group in Rome in 1947. In their manifesto, they claimed freedom for the individual to believe in Marxism, but without rigid adherence to the Party line. They styled themselves ‘formalists *and* Marxists’, and condemned realism as spent and conformist, all of which made confrontation with the Party inevitable. Writer Elio **Vittorini**, himself a sort of symbolic realist, suggested that artists should be free to at least pretend they were autonomous, and not be obliged to ‘suonare il piffero per la rivoluzione’ (play the pipe for the revolution).

At the **Venice Biennale** of 1948 came the definitive break between realists and abstract art. What seemed the golden years of neorealism turned out to be its last hurrah, as abstract groups began to proliferate. Renewed artistic contact with France encouraged a formalist style, variously described as concrete art, geometric abstraction or post-cubist. In Milan, MAC (the Movement of Concrete Art) was developed in 1948 under the influence of critic Gillo Dorfles, with artists Bruno **Munari** and Atanasio Soldati. Lucio **Fontana**, in the same city, began *spazialismo* (spatialism). In Rome, *Arti Visive* (Visual Arts), a magazine dealing with abstraction, was founded, as were Gruppo Origine with Ettore **Colla**, Alberto **Burri** and Giuseppe Capogrossi, and the Fondazione Origine gallery, which exhibited abstract works.

The 1950s

Throughout the 1950s, while older artists such as Guttuso and **Marini** continued to work in a figurative vein, the major developments took place in non-figurative art, on the fault line between formal and informal abstraction. Critic Lionello Venturi oversaw the formation of the **Gruppo degli otto** pittori Italiani (Group of Eight Italian Artists) in 1952, coining the term ‘abstractconcrete’ to describe their work. The group was in fact quite varied, although Afro, Birolli and Santomaso certainly had formalist qualities. As American influences became dominant, there was a shift towards informalism. For the sake of clarity, we should note that whilst some Italian critics distinguish between abstract expressionism, action painting and *arte informale* (or ‘*informel*’ as it is called in France), others use them quite interchangeably. However, despite differences between artists and countries, all these terms generally refer to an art that is gestural, which reveals the mark of the artist in creating the work. The artwork is thus a spontaneous record rather than a premeditated outcome. This was characteristic of Burri, Vedova and Fontana, and also of Sergio Romiti and Mario Mafai.

Sculpture in the 1950s, such as the work of **Colla** and the **Pomodoro** brothers, also tended toward abstraction, though here the distinction between formal and informal is

less valid since, by virtue of its medium, it is difficult for sculpture to be purely gestural or devoid of intended form.

The 1960s and 1970s

By the 1960s, the limitations of the wilful individualism of informalism had become obvious. While Vedova continued in this vein, other artists turned back to exploring the possibilities of pattern making and optical effects. The spirit of MAC was revived in 1960 by the Concrete Art exhibition in Zurich which included works by Dorazio, **Manzoni** and Castellani. The idea that the work was something beyond merely the process carried out by the artist dovetailed with the writings of Umberto **Eco** on the open work and the role of the reader. The notion of art as research and therefore a group activity with logical components took hold to the extent that a plethora of new groups appeared: Gruppo T in Milan and Gruppo N in Padua, Gruppo I, Sperimentale P and Gruppo Operativo R in Rome, Tempo 3 in Genoa, Gruppo Atoma in Livorno and Gruppo V in Rimini.

In 1961, as a more specific reaction to *informale*, the group **Continuità** (Continuity) was formed, championed by critic Carlo Argan and advocating formal abstraction with a return to the values of composition and reference to the artistic past rather than spontaneity and the fragmentation of informalism. Argan also spoke of ‘the sign’, a recognizable, considered element specific to a certain artist. The group included Consagra, Dorazio, Turcato and the Pomodoro brothers.

During the 1960s the real appeared in art in two unusual ways. The first was pop, which used representation of real things and objects themselves, sometimes of the most banal sort, such as everyday bits and pieces and advertising. **Baj** used collage to achieve political satire, while **Schifano** reproduced street signage and television screens. The second was through *arte povera*. The works produced by this loose-knit movement did not necessarily stand for anything else. They drew attention to the qualities of the material itself, at times raw and at other times already elaborated, such as Pascali’s *Due metri cubi di terra* (Two Cubic Metres of Earth), which was just that, Prini’s *Perimetro d’aria* (Perimeter of Air), and the parrot of **Kounellis**.

Arte povera signalled an attempt to move away from the production of individual items for an elite art market, in response to a growing disillusionment with consumer society and the Italian state. The social and political upheaval of 1968–9 marked a watershed in the production of art, after which many artists declared easel painting to be dead and took to forms of conceptual art and performance, which placed strong emphasis on delivering a message. **Merz**, **Boetti** and **Fabro** produced conceptual work; **Pistoletto** progressed from his painted mirrors to live street theatre.

Despite the claims of some of its exponents, art turned out to be a rather ineffective weapon for social change. The political and economic traumas of the 1970s played themselves out without obvious assistance from artists. What appeal remained in the old ideologies was finally exhausted, and with them, the myth of the value of the avantgarde and experimentation.

The return of figuration

The stage was set for the revival of the processes and traditions of art by a group of painters whom Bonito Oliva labelled the transavantgarde. **Clemente, Paladino, Cucchi** and **Chia** led a return to a figurative art of personal expression, which made reference to the art of the past. It was an ‘untopical’ art, which did not attempt to comment on the events of the day. Whereas movements of the 1960s had eschewed technique and argued that everyone was, or could be, an artist, the transavantgarde was elitist, elevating the artist to the position of a hero gifted with extraordinary technical skills and imagination, an attitude which polarized other artists.

Despite Bonito Oliva’s claims for its uniqueness, the transavantgarde has proved to be the rule rather than the exception. It is part of a much larger trend by artists to return to the figurative styles and motifs of the past. **De Chirico**, who had worked in the same style for fifty years and been increasingly derided for it, came back into fashion. **Mariani** produced polished works in the style of David and Mengs, albeit with more surreal subject matter. Ubaldo Bartolini’s landscapes are uncanny imitations of Claude and Poussin. These revivalists have been given a swag of names: new romantics, *anacronisti*, *pittura colta* painters, *ipermanieristi*. However, their work is not mere copying. It is informed and enriched by the entire course of modern art, so it is abstract and conceptual, as well as having aesthetic and representational values.

See also: art criticism

Further reading

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Celant, G. (ed.) (1994) *The Italian Metamorphosis, 1943–1968*, New York: Guggenheim Museum (exhibition catalogue, wide-ranging coverage of art, photography, cinema, design and fashion; valuable for colour and black and white illustrations and reproduction of documents).

MAX STAPLES

arte concreta (concrete art)

In very broad terms, non-figurative abstract art can be divided into two tendencies: one is expressive and spontaneous (see **L’Informale**) whilst the other is a calculated art which is non-representational and non-illusory, and which explores instead the properties of its own materials and forms, thus representing only itself. Although this distinction is not absolute, and some artists produced works in both categories, it was the latter tendency, strongly under the influence of cubism, which was the dominant form of abstraction in Italy in the 1940s and early 1950s.

In 1947 the Forma group, which included Carla **Accardi**, Pietro **Consagra** and Giulio Turcato, declared itself both formalist and Marxist. In declaring that pure form is all that

exists, it not only directed itself against realism, which it described as spent and conformist, but also against any art with expressive or psychological qualities. Furthermore, its condemnation of all arbitrary elements in art, such as reliance on the subconscious, placed it in direct opposition to that aspect of surrealism that would later become central to abstract expressionism.

The Movimento per l'arte concreta (MAC), formed in 1948 by critic Gillo **Dorflès** and artists Atanasio Soldati and Bruno **Munari**, claimed still greater purity by rejecting any social or political programme for their art. Gruppo Origine, founded in Rome by Ettore **Colla**, Alberto **Burri** and Giuseppe Capogrossi, called for a reduction of art to elementary forms with a complete renunciation of decorative and illusionistic effects, although it did concede an expressive function for the artist.

The mid- to late 1950s came to be strongly influenced by *L'Informale* and abstract expressionism. However, of the two abstract tendencies—one expressive and the other geometrical—it was the more ordered variety that eventually won out, and led to the movements of the 1960s. One reason was the rise of the idea of art as a form of research, to be carried out by groups. A number of groups appeared, all claiming to be engaged in 'research' into abstract design: Gruppo T in Milan, Gruppo N in Padua, Gruppo I, Operative R and Sperimentale P in Rome, Tempo 3 in Genoa, Gruppo Atoma in Livorno and Gruppo V in Rimini.

In 1961 the group **Continuità** (Continuity) was formed by the artists **Consagra**, Dorazio, **Turcato** and the brothers **Pomodoro**. The name was a reference to the need for a link with the past, in a formal abstraction that showed a return to composition. The group's champion, the critic Giulio Carlo **Argan**, held these up as positive values in opposition to the fragmentary and spontaneous nature of informalism. There was also interest in 'the sign' as a recognizable considered motif, as in the regular, non-representational shapes created by sculptor Arnaldo Pomodoro.

Piero **Manzoni's** 'achromes' were intended to be completely devoid of expressive or representational qualities. A picture, he said famously, says nothing. Thus, in spite of the overwhelming force of personality that abstract expressionism imposed on the viewer, concrete art moved ineluctably towards the notion of the 'open work' (see Umberto **Eco**).

Further reading

'Manifestos' (1994) in G. Celant, *The Italian Metamorphosis, 1943–1968*, New York: Guggenheim Museum, 708–25.

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arte povera

A loosely associated art movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s, *arte povera* (poor art) presented all sorts of objects as art. Exponents included Pino Pascali, Gilberto **Zorio**,

Mario **Merz**, Luciano **Fabro**, Michelangelo **Pistoletto**, Alighiero **Boetti**, Emilio Prini, Giovanni **Anselmo**, Jannis **Kounellis**, Giuseppe Penone and Giulio **Paolini**.

The name was coined in 1967 for a group exhibition in Genoa, *Arte povera-Im spazio*, curated by Germano **Celant**. By 'poor', Celant meant works which were not necessarily highly elaborated, and which could well be things already existing in the world. The exhibition demonstrated a new interest in materials themselves, such as Pascali's *Due metri cubi di terra* (Two Cubic Metres of Earth). Prini articulated an empty space with lights in the corners and centre in his *Perimetro d'aria* (Perimeter of Air). Soon after, Kounellis exhibited a parrot.

The 'poor' was also intended politically. In the heightened political atmosphere of the day, Celant positioned the movement as anti-capitalist, anticonsumerist and opposed to the creation of unique masterpieces for a small elite. In a boisterous manifesto in *flash Art* of November 1967, Celant described *arte povera* as guerrilla art, and praised its freedom and energy. The critic Achille **Bonito Oliva** also championed the movement as an art of social protest, opposed to the status quo and to 'the System'.

Over the next few years, in exhibitions in Italy and throughout Europe, *arte povera* manifested a freedom of materials and influences, a renewed interest in the personal and subjective, and a willingness to evoke attitudes and moods without precise meanings. It tended toward installation and untitled works which were abstract and non-figurative even when composed of natural materials. Bonito Oliva described the artist as organizer rather than creator, bringing forward natural elements which could include the artist's own actions without judgement or manipulation. In this respect, *arte povera* differed from the formal concerns of minimalism.

Celant's manifestos were written as programmes rather than description, so it is hardly surprising that in reality the works of the *arte povera* artists are sometimes more refined than he suggested. Furthermore, although they may have been subversive of the accepted definition of art at the time, they never made direct statements, nor did they have any discernible impact on the contemporary political situation.

By the 1980s, the movement had been superseded by the return to figurative art and painting. The claim that art could change the world now seemed naive and outdated, and Celant and Bonito Oliva moved on to champion other, more fashionable concerns.

Further reading

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 —(1969) *Arte Povera: Conceptual, Actual or Impossible Art.*, London: Studio Vista.

MAX STAPLES

arts festivals

Italy's arts festivals are numerous and widespread. They include international exhibitions such as the **Venice Biennale**, the contemporary arts extravaganza held every odd-numbered year in the numerous pavilions of the Giardini Pubblici in Venice, and the annual **Spoleto Festival** of the Two Worlds, a two-month long festival of classical concerts, films, ballet, street theatre and performing arts.

Many of Italy's arts festivals are held during the summer months in major cities, resort areas or smaller provincial towns. The venues for many of these festivals are often historical and monumental settings. For example, Rome offers open air opera at the Baths of Caracalla and concerts at the Campidoglio in July. The Sferisterio in Macerata in the Marche region and the Roman arena in Verona also become music venues every year during the summer months, and the Panatenee Pompeiane is a music festival held in the ruins of Pompeii during the last week in August. In Siracusa, the ancient theatre becomes the site for Greek drama in May and June.

Summer brings special programmes of music and culture to Milan, the Milano d'estate in July and. Vacanza a Milano in August. In nearby Brescia from June to September, the Estate Aperta offers an impressive array of concerts, theatrical performances and films in churches, courtyards and piazze. Sabbioneta, a town close to Mantova, holds a summer music festival. Music, theatre and dance are offered in Turin in the month of June when the city invites international companies to the Sere d'Estate festival. Settembre Musica in Turin is a month-long extravaganza of classical concerts performed in various venues in the city. The Asti Teatro, which is held during the last two weeks of June and the first week of July, presents theatrical productions from medieval to modern and includes jazz, drama and dance. Bologna's newest night-time summer entertainment is the city-sponsored Bologna Sogna series, which features shows and concerts in the city's piazza and museums in July and August. In the same months, Ferrara hosts Ferrara Estate, a music and theatre festival that brings a diverse number of performances to the city's piazze. For one week at the end of June or the beginning of July, the Settimana Estense features at Modena with special exhibits, art shows and an authentic historic parade. During July and August the city sponsors a summer music, ballet, and theatre series called Sipario in Piazza. The city of Parma sponsors a summer music festival called Concerti nei chiostrì, which features classical music in the local churches and cloisters. From the last week in June to the last week in August, the Church of San Francesco in Ravenna sponsors Ravenna in Festival featuring operas, concerts, folk music and drama.

The last half of July offers an opera and theatre festival at Barga near Lucca, and the Estate Fiesolana is a summer festival held from mid-June to August featuring music, cinema, ballet and theatre in the Tuscan town which overlooks Florence. Siena and Stresa both offer a Settimana musicale in August. The Estate Musicale Lucchese stretches from

July to September, and the September period is taken up with a combination of artistic, athletic and folkloric presentations.

In July and August, Estate a Perugia offers a series of musical, cinematic and dance performances. Macerata, a little-known provincial capital in the Marche region, hosts an annual Stagione Lirica offering opera and ballet performances in an open air venue. Amandola, a hill village in the Marche, hosts a week-long international theatre festival in the first week of September. Focusing on participation, the festival overcomes language barriers through mime and movement performances and workshops. Viterbo hosts a baroque music festival from mid-June to July. The village of Scanno in Abruzzo is a well-preserved medieval village surrounded by mountains, which holds a classical musical festival every August. Martina Franca in the Puglia region puts on the Festival della Valle d'Itria, an opera, classical and jazz festival at the end of July and the first week in August. The city of Lecce comes alive in July and August with the Estate Musicale Leccese a festival of music and dance.

In Sicily, from July to September the city of Cefalu hosts Incontri d'estate, outdoor concerts of classical, contemporary and Sicilian folk music as well as opera. The city of Taormina hosts Taormina Arte, an international festival of theatre, music and film in its Greek theatre from July through September.

In Sardinia, the city of Cagliari hosts an arts festival in its amphitheatre which includes concerts, operas and classical plays. In Alghero in July and August the classical music of the Estate musicale internazionale fills the cloisters of the Church of San Francesco.

Some of Italy's festivals celebrate composers who achieved international fame. For example, the music of Puccini is performed in an annual celebration from the end of July to mid-August in his home town of Torre del Lago, and Rossini's music is celebrated in Pesaro from mid-August to September. In September, Bergamo celebrates its renowned native-born composer with a festival of Gaetano Donizetti's lesser known works. The Festival Vivaldi takes place in Venice in early September, and in summer Vivaldi's music is featured in a concert series in the church of Santa Maria della Pietà, where he was choirmaster.

There are a number of other well-known music festivals in Italy. Florence itself offers Maggio Musicale, one of the most famous festivals of opera and classical music in Italy. Contrary to what the name suggests, it occurs not exclusively in May but continuously from late April to early July with additional offerings in October and November. Events are staged at the Teatro Comunale, the Teatro della Pergola, the Palazzo dei Congressi and occasionally in the Boboli Gardens.

There is a chamber music festival in Città di Castello every August and September. In Brescia, there is a universally acclaimed two-month International Piano Festival. Ravello's numerous classical music festivals are held the weeks of New Year's Day, Easter and during parts of June, July and September. These concerts are held in the cathedral and in the gardens of the Villa Rufolo, usually hosting musicians of international renown.

In addition to classical music, a number of other musical genres are also represented in Italian festivals. Jazz is celebrated at the Riva di Garda International Jazz and Folklore festival. The Umbria Jazz Festival is held in Perugia every July and August, and the Siena Jazz festival also takes place in August. Pistoia attracts European visitors during the last weekend of June for the Pistoia Blues concert series, and Salerno hosts an

International Blues festival in July. There is also an International Music Festival in the last half of May in Naples and a Neapolitan song contest at Piedigrotta in the first half of September. The city of Umbertide hosts an annual summer rock festival.

Naturally enough, Italy also boasts a number of important film festivals. In addition to the Venice Film Festival—the oldest international film festival in the world—international film festivals are held in Taormina, Messina, Salerno and Verona. Sorrento hosts an international cinema convention in October. Pesaro hosts the International Festival of New Films during the second and third weeks of June in an effort to show rarely screened films, new and old, commercially and independently produced.

Though not technically a festival, Italy's **opera** season also looms large in the cultural calendar, beginning in December and running through to May or June. The main opera houses in Italy are **La Scala** in Milan, the Teatro dell'Opera in Rome, the Teatro Comunale in Florence and the Teatro San Carlo in Naples. Other major cities also have opera houses with regular seasons. Bergamo's opera season lasts from September to November. Trieste's regular opera season in the Teatro Verdi runs from November to May, but also features a six-week operetta season in June and July. There are also countless other lesser known venues with regular opera performances and, in addition to opera, many Italian cities also run regular theatre and ballet seasons.

See also: music festivals; opera

BERNADETTE LUCIANO

Agenzia Spaziale Italiana

The Agenzia Spaziale Italiana (ASI) or Italian Space Agency was instituted in 1988 with responsibility for managing and co-ordinating all Italian participation in space exploration and research. With an annual budget of around 700 million dollars, the Agency is responsible for preparing and implementing recurrent national five-year plans of research and development in the areas of space technology, earth sciences and telecommunications. ASI is also charged with co-ordinating all Italian participation in the programmes of the European Space Agency (ESA), which Italy helped to found in 1975 and to which it contributes financially. Both as part of ESA and independently, ASI cooperates with other national and international space agencies such as NASA on collaborative projects such as the permanent International Space Station (ISS), which Italy is helping to build and on which it will have allocated space and resources for ongoing research.

GINO MOLITERNO

Asor Rosa, Alberto

b. 23 September 1933, Rome

Literary historian and politician

Professor of Italian Literature at the University of Rome, 'La Sapienza' and a pupil of Natalino **Sapegno**, Asor Rosa was a long-time member of the **PCI** (Italian Communist Party) and from 1989–90 directed the party weekly *Rinascita*. In the early 1960s Asor Rosa edited two influential journals on the Left, *Classe operaia* (Working Class) and *Quaderni Rossi* (Red Notebooks). His most important works have treated political and social issues as well as literary and cultural topics. In *Scrittori e popolo* (Writers and the People) (1985) he traces the thread of populism in Italian literature from the Risorgimento through to **Pasolini**, while questioning **Gramsci's** notion of a 'national-popular literature'. Asor Rosa has also written extensively on seventeenth-century literature and society. In 1979 he was elected a member of the Chamber of Deputies, only to resign a year later (see also **Parliament**). Since 1982 he has been editor-in-chief of *Letteratura italiana* (Italian Literature), published by **Einaudi**.

LAURENCE SIMMONS

athletics

The efforts of CONI (the Italian Olympic Committee) and FIDAL (the Italian Track and Field Federation) have consistently put Italy among the world's top competitors (see **Olympics**). Italian teams excel in disciplines such as indoor cycling, fencing and shooting. In track and field, special mention should go to Pietro Mennea, whose record for the 200 metres was unbeaten for more than sixteen years, high-jumper Sara Simeoni, and long-distance runner Alberto Cova. Many victories have come from marathon-runners: Orlando Pizzolato won the New York City marathon in 1984 and 1985, and later winners have included Gianni Poli in 1986, Giacomo Leone in 1996 and Franca Fiacconi in 1998. Gelindo Bordin became Italy's first marathon gold medalist in Seoul in 1988, and won the Boston marathon in 1990. The most important Italian annual meet is at Sestriere, in the northwestern Alps, where the prize for anyone setting a new world record is a **Ferrari** car. In September 1996, after extensive renovations, the historic Arena of Milan was re-opened for the Grand Prix, the competition that determines the best athlete in each class.

PAOLO VILLA

Auditel

Following an agreement in 1984 between **RAI** (state television) and the **private television** networks which had emerged in the wake of the deregulation of television broadcasting in 1975 (see **broadcasting**), Auditel was instituted as an independent research organization for monitoring the viewing habits of ‘typical’ Italians by a system of electronic meters attached to the television sets of anonymous ‘average’ families. Monitoring began in December 1985 and television programming soon came to be almost completely determined by the Auditel ratings, especially during the ‘television wars’ of the late 1980s. The credibility of the agency’s figures was often widely contested, particularly on the grounds of too limited a sample (originally there were 633 meters for all of Italy, later increased to 1,300 and finally in 1997 to 8,000 meters, monitoring 5,000 families) but Auditel ratings continued to be the touchstone for television programming well into the 1990s. By this time the agency had expanded its survey methods to include regular personal interviews and also began to publish its data on the World Wide Web.

GINO MOLITERNO

Aulenti, Gaetana

b. 4 December 1927, Palazzolo della Stella, Udine

Architect and designer

Gae Aulenti belongs to the second wave of Milanese postwar designers. A frequent contributor to **Casabella** after graduating from the Milan Politecnico in 1954, she developed fastidious furniture designs in the 1950s and 1960s. She also contributed considerably to the European art museum design genre, her first project being the Musée d’Orsay, involving the transformation of a Parisian railway station into a museum (completed 1986), a feat which earned her international renown. There followed the Palazzo Grassi in Venice, the Catalanian Art museum and the Greater Istanbul Municipality Art Museum. She designed exhibitions for **Olivetti** and **Fiat**. Whether working on integrating theatre and regional landscape (Laboratorio teatrale in Prato, 1975–79), on the church of Santa Maria Novella and **Michelucci’s** train station in Florence, or just providing a new setting within an existing structure (the Beaubourg’s Modern Art Museum), Aulenti’s solutions always demonstrate unusual clarity but often provoke controversy.

See also: interior design

Further reading

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GORDANA KOSTICH

Aut aut

One of the more important Italian philosophical periodicals, *Aut aut* (its Latin title alludes to existential choice and, in particular, Søren Kierkegaard's 'Either/Or') was founded by Enzo **Paci** (1911–76), one of the major exponents of existentialism in Italy. Often using *Aut aut* as his vehicle, Paci examined the existential links between subjectivity and historical materialism and also spearheaded an influential 'return' to the phenomenology of Edmund Husserl in the 1960s. In recent decades, *Aut aut* has been important for the introduction of French post-structuralist thought to Italy including the writings of Foucault, Lacan, Derrida, Lyotard and Deleuze, as well as furnishing a forum for contemporary re-readings of Marx, Freud and Nietzsche. *Aut aut* has also provided a focus for philosophers of the pensiero debole (Weak Thought) school, and Gianni **Vattimo**, Remo Bodei and Giorgio **Agamben** are frequent contributors.

LAURENCE SIMMONS

autonomia

Autonomia (autonomy) was an influential topic for debate among a dissident Marxist intelligentsia in the 1960s, and a practical aspiration among variegated components of left-wing youth culture in the 1970s. The theoretical development of the term, offering a new analysis of the developmental trends in capitalist society, owes most to the writings of Raniero Panzieri in *Quaderni Rossi*. Panzieri's emphasis on the factory as a key site in the struggle for a Communist society, retrieved from **Gramsci's** then largely-ignored early writings on the worker councils of 1919–21, was elaborated in particular by Mario Tronti. The notion of 'autonomy' was hailed as marking a decisive advance for Marxist-Leninist theory in two respects. First, the development of capitalist work organization generated simultaneously capacities for subordination and insubordination: it created the social knowledge, relations and needs among workers which undermined its own power. This argument resisted any suggestion that capitalist society tended progressively to integrate the working-class and narcotize its interest in, and capacity for, socialist revolution. Second, emphasis on the overriding significance of conflicts in the workplace devalued the importance of working-class political organization and the conquest of state power. Left-wing parties and trade unions naturally regarded with suspicion a school of

thought which implied a substantial reduction in the historical importance of their own role as agents of political enlightenment and collective mobilization.

Until the 1970s, interest in ‘autonomy’ remained confined to the fields of theory and to historical investigations of its hitherto unnoticed existence among subordinate classes. Its translation into active extreme left-wing politics in the 1970s derived mainly from three sources. First, the groups of the extraparlimentary Left found the notion of ‘autonomy’ a useful basis for their distinctive political genealogies and a ready framework for criticism of ‘reformist’ **PCI** and **trade unions**, mired in capitalist rationality. Second, the emergence of dissident youth and feminist cultures suggested that an increasingly heterogeneous society had outrun capitalism’s ability to satisfy its needs. Third, the expansion of exploitative ‘informal economies’ presaged the replacement of a disciplined workforce built around stable careers and job satisfaction by a disaffected marginal proletariat with Luddite predilections.

Such diverse ideas found equally loosely-organized expression in the many-hued *autonomia* movement of 1973–77, built around ‘proletarian youth circles’ and ‘social centres’, with its cultural capital in Bologna and its political strongholds in Milan (the broadsheet *Rosso*), Rome and Padua (Radio Sherwood). Political leadership was claimed mainly by academics (Negri, Piperno) who detected proof of the growth of ‘autonomy’ in political violence and industrial sabotage. Support waned following deaths in confrontations with police provoked by *autonomia* groups in 1977, disappearing altogether in 1979 after the arrest of its leading figures on charges of involvement in violence, followed by their long pre-trial imprisonment, conviction and flight abroad.

See also: Radio Alice; Red Brigades; extraparlimentary Left; terrorism

Further reading

- Lotringer, S. and Marazzi, G. (eds) (1980) *Italy: Autonomia. Post-Political Politics*, special edition of *Semiotext(e)* 3 (3) (an extensive series of readings by both protagonists and antagonists of *autonomia*).
- Lumley, R. (1990) *States of Emergency: Cultures of Revolt in Italy from 1968 to 1978*, London, Verso.
- Tronti, M. (1966) *Operai e capitale* (Workers and Capital), Turin: Einaudi (major work of influential theorist).

DAVID MOSS

autostrada network

In the interwar period, Italy had by comparison with other European countries only a very small, non-integrated network of highways (less than 500 km in 1945, built up by private companies and almost exclusively centred on Milan and the northwest regions). The gap began to be bridged only in the 1960s–1970s, when both mass motorization and tourism

gained momentum and the development of a national highway system became one of the main goals of the economic planners.

At that time **IRI**, through its affiliate Società Autostrade, made massive investments and played a leading role in boosting the growth of the network, but private companies also received concessions from the state and the highway system rapidly expanded from 1,500 to nearly 5,000 km. The industrialized regions of northern and central Italy came to be increasingly connected by high-speed motorways which also linked to northern Europe through long tunnels passing under the Alps, and for the first time the network was also extended southwards through long-distance highways along both the Adriatic and Tyrrhenian coasts. The Mezzogiorno (southern Italy) was thus brought nearer to the rest of Italy, but it nevertheless continued to suffer a wide gap in comparison with the rest of the country, while the main legs—the north-south motorway Milan to Rome, the so-called Autostrada del Sole (Sun Highway), and the west—east leg Turin to Trieste—became increasingly congested. This situation provoked widespread public dissatisfaction, as traffic by both private cars and trucks grew dramatically (the vehicles per km ratio increased from about 15,000 a year in 1970 to over 55,000 in the early 1990s) and conditions, especially in peak holiday periods, deteriorated. In fact, public investments were stopped in the mid-1970s and the autostrada network has remained practically at a standstill ever since (there were 5,550 km of toll highways and tunnels in mid-1990s, plus some 900 km of non-toll routes). Subsequently, both Società Autostrade and private concessionaire companies submitted a cluster of new plans to the Ministry for Public Works, related mainly to projects for the building of 1,000 km of new highways in the industrialized northern regions, but none of these have been carried out. Another project for doubling the 90 km Florence to Bologna leg across the Apennine mountains (actually the most crowded highway in Italy, with up to 50,000 vehicles a day and daily traffic jams) provoked fierce opposition from environmentalist organizations, not to mention wearisome bargaining between national and local governments, and so exists only on paper. Plans for a badly needed refurbishment of the southern route from Salerno to Reggio Calabria (a non-toll and thus unprofitable highway) were also pigeonholed.

Yet managing autostradas has been a remarkable source of profits in recent years, as both traffic and tolls have continued to increase; it is not by chance that concerns such as **Fiat** (through its affiliate Fiatimpresit) and other large building companies have enlarged their shareholdings in private concessionaires, which already run nearly 45 per cent of the toll highways network. Large cash flow and high profitability were expected to aid the privatization of Società Autostrade, which was announced in 1997 by the **Prodi** government, but this venture suddenly faded. As the expected extension of the state concession's expiry date from 2018 to 2038 was rejected by the Corte dei Conti (Court of Accounts), Autostrade's shares plummeted on the stock market and the interest of would-be private shareholders declined. A new programme of privatization was announced by the D'Alema government in 1999. Nevertheless, whatever the future of Società Autostrade, the highway system is in need of action. Northern industry—responsible for 50 per cent of GDP and 65 per cent of all exports—has been expressing alarm at the loss of competitiveness caused by a transport system on the verge of a collapse both domestically and in terms of international links, especially in the northeast where Austria frequently denies transit permission to Italian trucks for environmental reasons. A massive effort to modernize the transport network as a whole (not only motorways but

also the **railway system** and ports) is still badly needed in order to avoid serious economic shortcomings in the future.

See also: tourism

STEFANO BATTILOSSI

avantgarde theatre

The immediate postwar era opened the Italian stage to works of American realism, Brechtian epic theatre and French absurdist drama previously banned under Fascism. American realism informs the early wordy drama of writers such as Giuseppe **Patroni Griffi** and Natalia **Ginzburg**, while Giorgio **Strehler** disseminated Brecht's politically conscious theatre throughout Italy from his Piccolo Teatro in Milan. With its own roots in the theatre of Luigi Pirandello, French absurdism in turn influenced the dramatic output of Dino **Buzzati**, Mario Fratti and Enzo **Siciliano**, while French absurdism itself found a precarious haven for production within Italy with the opening of Aldo **Trionfo's** theatre La Borsa di Arlecchino (Arlecchino's Bag) in Genoa in 1957.

Trionfo, Carmelo **Bene** and Luca **Ronconi** approached dramatic texts critically, each developing different strategies in order to expose and undermine the bourgeois ideological assumptions of the traditional repertoire. Texts were contaminated by extraneous and dialectical elements which allowed their context to be both read and critically deconstructed. Trionfo subjected works of French absurdism to a process of parody and pastiche, peppering them with gags, poems, songs, sketches and striptease in the cabaret tradition. Following the theories of Edoardo **Sanguineti** and the **Gruppo 63**, Ronconi sought to sabotage plays at the metalinguistic level by denaturalizing their language. Ronconi established his reputation with a theatrical production of Ariosto's epic *Orlando Furioso* performed at the **Spoleto Festival** in 1969 by staging different parts of the poem concurrently on separate wagons, thus forcing the audience to choose which portion they wished to follow. Ronconi extended Brechtian dramaturgy by emphasizing an episodic vertical structure over a linear dramatic one, and Brechtian alienation by having his actors serve simultaneously both as narrators and protagonists of the action. In 1977 Ronconi set up his Prato Theatre Workshop, where he has continued his experiments with both new and traditional texts. Bene attacked canonized texts by paring them down in a minimalist manner to what he deemed their ideological bare essentials. He furthered Brechtian estrangement by his use of intrusive dialectical soundtracks, the alienation of the actor's voice, and his evasion of empathetic interpretations and performance techniques.

Italian performance groups of the late 1960s and early 1970s sought to combine the experimentation of their futurist heritage with leftist revolutionary politics, but the utilization of dramatic texts for bringing about sociopolitical transformation bowed to much more aesthetic concerns in the work of Giuliano Vasilicò and Memè Perlini. Based at Teatro Beat '72 in Rome, Vasilicò deployed a parade of theatre pictures, tableaux vivants, slow repetitive movements, suggestive sounds and brief snatches of dialogue to evoke the consciousness of each of his chosen protagonists of different works, namely