

Fausto Pellecchia

Materiali per una filosofia della guerra

ABSTRACT: This reflection develops around the paradox connected to the irrepressible escalation of nuclear weapons: the more looming the threat of a possible nuclear catastrophe becomes, the more the possibility of this event is removed and rejected by the collective consciousness in the sphere of the unrepresentable. Hence the relevance of a thinker like Günther Anders who captures the characteristic feature of the “post-atomic era” (inaugurated by the destruction of Hiroshima) in the inability to imagine the consequences of a planetary atomic war. Hence the need for an “education of the imagination and emotions” for a new militant philosophy. This is followed by the analysis of the main positions of the philosophical tradition that have interpreted the natural inclination to conflict, as the *via regia* of the human being’s self-transcendence. Along the same line of thought, albeit with different emphases, we find Benjamin Constant, Proudhon, and then Nietzsche. Naturally, fascism has exploited the mobilizing force of this rhetoric of organic values that feed on conflict, exposure to danger and sacrifice; up to the demystification operated by Freud with the introduction of the death instinct as the inextricable root of human aggression. In conclusion, the essay focuses on René Girard’s anthropological analysis through his interpretation of the famous masterpiece by Carl von Clausewitz, *On the war*. The application of Girard’s hermeneutic device, centred on the “mimetic principle” and on the “reciprocity of action” makes possible a different, more stringent understanding of the current intertwining of categories on war violence, expressed through the oxymorons of “preemptive attack” and “early defense”.

Eugenio Polito

Cassino teatro di guerra: echi in lontano e memorie mute del paesaggio antico

ABSTRACT: The war scenario of 1944 in Cassino is preceded by a millenary history, not limited to that of the abbey. A pre-Roman oppidum, then a Roman city, finally a medieval fortification, the ancient city of Casinum controlled a crossroads of routes from Lazio to Campania and from the Sannio mountains to the Liri valley. Classical literature and epigraphy, combined with the examination of archaeological remains and the historical landscape, open up glimpses into the fate of a centre predestined for its position to be the theatre and victim of wars and destruction. Nevertheless, extraordinary monuments of antiquity survive, in part brought to light by the bombing; and much remains to be discovered. Of this heritage, endangered by neglect and modern building abuses, institutions and civil society do not seem to want to take charge. Recent legislative choices risk making the degradation and oblivion of the archaeological heritage of Cassino irreversible.

Roberto Gamberini

La biblioteca di Montecassino nel Medioevo: distruzioni, ricostruzioni e la sua rinascita con Aligerno

ABSTRACT: The military destructions that the abbey of Monte Cassino suffered in the Middle Ages had a strong impact on the monastic community, which was forced into exile both after the Lombard incursion of 577 and the Saracen one of 883. However, both events did not cause significant losses to its book heritage, which at that time must have been rather small. Conversely, the reconstruction led by Abbot Aligerno was decisive, since he transformed the role of the abbey both on a political level and on that of monastic and cultural orientation. The manuscript evidence shows how Aligerno pursued a systematic programme in equipping the library with all the necessary tools to make it a leading intellectual centre. Although his work was not immediately understood by the monastic

community, he allowed the abbey to play a fundamental role within the Church and in the cultural landscape of the following centuries.

Mariano Dell'Omo

L'archivio e la biblioteca di Montecassino tra ottobre e dicembre 1943. Da Cassino a Spoleto, da Spoleto a Roma, da Roma in Vaticano

ABSTRACT: This essay illustrates the events relating to the transport of the Montecassino archive and library during the Second World War, between 18 October and 8 December 1943, from the monastery to Spoleto and then to Rome and finally in the Vatican Library, where until October 1947 were deposited 128 capsules or open drawers, each containing archival documents, 26 cases containing codices, and another 235 cases containing printed matter from the monumental library. Greeted by Abbot Gregorio Diamare on October 14, 1943, two officers of the German army, lieutenant colonel Julius Schlegel and the medical captain Maximilian Becker outlined the serious risks that the monastery now ran, indeed the possible, almost certain, destruction, being the abbey destined to be in the combat zone between the allied armies and the German one. At this point it was not possible to decline the proposal, indeed the courteous but true command, to proceed with an evacuation made urgent also by the constraints of time. Don Tommaso Leccisotti, who was the first monk to arrive from Montecassino to Rome on the evening of 19 October 1943 with the means of transport of the German military, considered it his duty to immediately inform the Ministry of National Education and the other competent authorities, so that, also in consideration of the friendly and benevolent soul with which the evacuation operations had been carried out while he was in Montecassino, the Ministry itself provided as far as possible to control the transport and recovery of all the material of the archive and of the library. On 8 December, the Montecassino archive and library were returned and delivered to Rome with a solemn ceremony at Castel Sant'Angelo, to then be deposited in the Vatican. A part of the books and other material was deposited in the Roman monastery of St. Paul outside the walls, together with treasures of inestimable value, such as the collection of the Numismatic Museum of Syracuse and the Treasury of the chapel of S. Gennaro, which were been entrusted personally to Abbot Diamare.

Ivana Bruno

Arte in fuga, salvata e perduta a Montecassino durante la Seconda guerra mondiale

ABSTRACT: During the Second World War the Abbey of Montecassino was among the places considered safe and suitable to preserve part of the Italian heritage from German raids and damage due to the conflict. When, in October 1943, this certainty turned out to be false because the abbey was also at the centre of the war events, the Benedictine community had to worry about saving not only its artistic and cultural heritage but also the other collections entrusted to it, rendering an extraordinary service to European and world culture. The contribution, in continuity with a line of research started over a decade, aims to focus attention on an artistic heritage with a strong identity value, following the events of saved works, in flight and dispersed, in order to use this emblematic case to deepen the theme of the safeguard of the Italian cultural heritage during the Second World War.

Nicola Bottiglieri

La battaglia di Cassino nella memorialistica regionale

ABSTRACT: This essay analyses the testimonies of the inhabitants of the Liri Valley who from 8 September to June 44 saw two armies fighting in their territory, causing the destruction of dozens of villages, thousands of deaths, the dispersion of the population, and the spread of epidemics. The most dramatic moment was represented by the bombing of the Abbey of Montecassino, which took place on February 15, 1944. The peasant world suffered the violence of the “mechanical American society”, the invasion of hundreds of thousands from all over the world. But the real traumatic experience was that of the aerial bombing suffered by those people who had never seen an airplane, and who sometimes mistook falling bombs for candies.

Ilaria Magnani

Le dannate e i dannati della terra: gli stupri di guerra nel cassinate

ABSTRACT: Starting from a foundational text such as the *Iliad*, I intend to observe the use – naturalized by the literary and cultural filter – of sexual violence during war conflicts, focusing on some exemplary cases. While stigmatizing the dramatic addiction to such a practice and reiterating its indisputable condemnation, I believe it is necessary to make a distinction on some historical episodes. For this I intend to dwell on the so-called “Marocchine” (Moroccans’ deeds) to trace the instrumental and colonial nature of the management of the Franco-North African troops stained with such infamous gestures.

Roberto Baronti Marchiò

Il trauma e la memoria della Battaglia di Montecassino: A Canticle for Leibowitz di Walter M. Miller, Jr.

ABSTRACT: Starting from the consideration that eighty years after the bombing of Montecassino the remembrance of this battle is in danger of being lost, this contribution focuses on the importance of battlefields and cemeteries as true producers of historical memory. These are places that allow an emotional connection with the traumatic experience of war, thus continuing to keep the memory of those events alive. The article then moves on to War Literature as one of those “mediators” that contributes to the preservation of our national memory and analyses Walter M. Miller’s post-apocalyptic novel *A Canticle for Leibowitz*, which was born out of the author’s traumatic wartime experience when in 1944 as a tail gunner in the US Air Force aboard a B-25 he took part in the bombing of Montecassino Abbey. An experience that had a profound influence on his private life and on his career as a writer. The novel is a powerful meditation on human history and humanity condemned to live through successive cycles of history that are always doomed to end in a nuclear apocalypse.

Flora de Giovanni

Riannodare i fili della storia: la saga familiare e la Grande Guerra

ABSTRACT: As is widely known, psychological trauma can be healed by integrating the traumatic event into one's life history: for recovery to begin the sense of continuity between past and present must be restored. And this holds true for both individuals and societies. The family saga, which enjoyed a remarkable popularity in interwar Britain, often featured the Great War proving to be – thanks to its linear structure and the long time span it covers – an effective tool to process the painful experience and bridge the gap between pre- and post-war national identity. The aim of this essay is to analyse how two family novels of the '20s-'30s, *The Forsyte Saga* by John Galsworthy and *The Years* by Virginia Woolf, worked the First World War into their texture apparently achieving very different aims.

Micaela Latini

Das blaue Wild. Ingeborg Bachmann e il grande mattatoio della guerra

ABSTRACT: The article analyses Ingeborg Bachmann's *Unter Mördern und Irren* (1961) in the light of the theme of the survival of the violence and of the «crime virus» after the end of World War II (see also Der Fall Franza, 1978). The central question is how it is possible for victims and perpetrators to «sit at the same table»? Bachmann focuses on the discrepancy between human action and understanding one's own action in the age of advanced technology.

Saverio Tomaiuolo

Speak Languages or Die! Translation and Conflict in Quentin Tarantino's Inglorious Basterds

ABSTRACT: During international conflicts professional or amateur translators (including individuals who are fluent in a certain language) have become essential either in acquiring information – working as infiltrators, spies and informers – or in playing a specific role in negotiations and treaties. In this respect, the association between war, conflict and languages constitutes a paradigm that is inherent within translation dynamics, and which has been treated recently in a series of studies devoted to the issue of translation and/as war. By adopting as a textual model Quentin Tarantino's peculiar war movie *Inglorious Basterds* (2009), based as it is on a clash between nations, cultures, and languages (in which translators and mediating figures play a pivotal role), we will investigate the relationship between language, translation, (mis) translation, fluency, and conflicts. In our analysis we will focus on three specific episodes that highlight the terse relationship between national language, (mis)translation, and conflict. These three examples are indicative of the themes that characterise *Inglorious Basterds*, and which are inherent in the activity of cultural mediators as well.

Roberta Alviti

Miguel Hernández e gli attacchi aerei nazifascisti nella Guerra Civile del '36-'39: la "Canción del Antiavionista"

ABSTRACT: This paper focuses on the aerial bombings in Spain during the Civil War that bloodied the Peninsula from 1936 to 1939. Starting with the air raid on Guernica, and following the biographical path of Hernández, at the same time Spanish historical junctures in that historical phase are illustrated. The core of the article is the study of the "Canción del Antiavionista", a poem written by Miguel Hernández in 1937, who had been a soldier in the Republican ranks while Spain had been bombarded for over a year by the Nazi, Fascist and Franco's air forces. First a thematic study of the poem will be conducted; likewise, a metrical and rhetorical-stylistic analysis will be carried out, and an attempt will be made to highlight recurring stylistic features and semantic fields.

Amedeo Di Francesco

«... e la vita di un uomo qui ha poco valore»: Pagine di letteratura ungherese sull'assedio e la caduta di Przemyśl (1914-15)

ABSTRACT: Between September 1914 and March 1915, the first major battle that tsarist Russia fought at the beginning of World War I against the Austro-Hungarian Empire took place. It is remembered as the Siege of Przemyśl, for this huge fortress town – now a thriving and important town in southeastern Poland only a few kilometers from the border with Ukraine but then playing the role of a real defensive bulwark of the territories of Austria and Hungary – was invested at length by the Russian offensive and resisted it strenuously until its surrender on March 22, 1915. Interestingly, the subsequent recapture of Przemyśl in the summer of that same year failed to erase the memory of that sad defeat in Hungary. The present contribution reenacts, analyses and contextualises the echoes that the wartime confrontation provoked in contemporary Hungarian literature. Two war diaries and a number of poems resulting from the cultural endeavors of the soldiers who served inside the fortress and who were later taken prisoners and transferred to the various locations in the vast Russian territory are presented and commented on. Due prominence is also given to the reports of the journalist-writers sent to the front and the comments published in the press by the intellectuals who observed from the hinterland the unfolding of that event. The reader is thus able to learn how an important, and almost forgotten episode in military history, contributed to the birth of an important chapter in early twentieth-century Hungarian literature.

Enza Silvestrini

Carlo Bernari, Prologo alle tenebre: Napoli e la guerra

ABSTRACT: Highly topical in its desire to unmask conformism and false consciousness, *Prologo alle tenebre* (1947) is a novel by Carlo Bernari. The five-part structure, each dedicated to one of protagonists' secrets, allows the author to reconstruct the social-cultural environment of the years of Fascism, the antifascist struggle and the war. The darkness of the lies and abjection, that war breeds in the soul, pervade the existence of individuals unable to distinguish between what's true and false. Individuals became part of the resigned silence created within the regime's climate of fear. Going through and witnessing his time, Bernari analyses the relationship between the individual and society, the individual and History. This is the central theme of his entire oeuvre. Naples, where the story is

set when stripped of the folkloric rhetoric that hides its authenticity, ripped apart by bombs, the anger of the industrial proletariat, becomes the city of everyone.

Laure Borgomano

Ulysse à Auschwitz – Proust au Goulag: Quand la culture résiste

ABSTRACT: Proust read at the Gulag; Ulysses at Auschwitz and Dachau; Molière presented at Birkenau and Ravensbrück; Paul Valéry, Louise Labé, Heine, recited in the latrines of Buchenwald... Numerous are the testimonies of deported persons describing performances of theatre plays, reciting of poetry, discussions of art, politics, religion in the most unlikely situations of constraint. How can we understand the presence of culture, remembered but even more recited, shared among peers, in concentration camps and in the Gulag? This article proposes to analyse from a philosophical standpoint the strength of individual and collective resistance thanks to culture in extreme situations. From a large body of testimonies, stories and essays on concentration camps and deportation, the article looks at the following points in succession. 1. The function of time, and that of memory, individual as well as collective, which enable the cultural offering to establish a trans-generational link (Plato, Henri Bergson, Paul Ricoeur, Walter Benjamin); 2. The movement of sense, the way in which, starting from a cultural offering, even an old one, it directs itself to every one, provided he or she knows how to welcome it and transmit it to others, allowing it thus to transform an unbearable present into a lived experience which constitutes the basis of a narrative identity (Jean-Michel Salanskis, Henri Maldiney); 3. The role of the collective situation, the way in which sharing culture invents a collective space-time of resistance to de-subjection (Jean-Michel Salanskis, Paul Ricoeur); 4. The power of transitional space, a subjective and internal space of elaboration of what proceeds from the objective outside space, thus permitting access to symbolization and cultural creativity (Averroes, Jean-Baptiste Brenet, Donald W. Winnicott). The author concludes that resorting to culture in concentration camps should not be seen as simple resistance by default: there is a consubstantial link between the physical crowding of bodies in the deportation wagons, the blocks, the gas chambers and the crushing of a psychic space by propaganda and ideology. When inventing the collective conditions of a symbolic space-time, however fragile, the deported resist, politically and ethically, to the annihilation and de-subjection enterprise wanted by the Nazis.

Tania Raso

Ridere della guerra: il caso di Curzio Malaparte, Kurt Vonnegut e Patricio Pron

ABSTRACT: This article aims to analyse the use of irony in literature and, in particular, in three war novels: two about World War II and one about the Falklands war. In the first part, the main characteristics of irony are presented, as the use of a copious adjectivation and exaggeration or the use of another expedient such as parody. In the second one, it is shown how all these stratagems operate in the novels selected. In these pages we reflect about how it is possible to laugh about war and, at the same time, to generate a reflection about its moral and physical destruction.

Jolanta Maria Żurawska

L'eterno mito della speranza sulla Cresta della testa del Serpente

ABSTRACT: Why on earth does the “Doctor’s House”, a tiny stone-built building on the Snake’s Head Ridge, become key to understanding the Polish feelings and poetry during and after the memorable feat of Montecassino? Why does one particular mythos, that of Pandora, help us gain new insight into events which are so painful, but at the same time so heroic and filled with expectations? Through a reconstruction of facts and literary documents, the text highlights this aspect of the story of the Battle and its narrators.

Carla Forno

Morire «da vero letterato». Vittorio Alfieri, «personaggio della posterità»

ABSTRACT: This article deals with the complex issues surrounding the death of Vittorio Alfieri on 8 October 1803, both in the last decade of the poet’s life in Florence (where he settled with Luisa Stolberg after fleeing from Paris during the dramatic days of the Revolution) and in the twenty years that followed, when Luisa Stolberg and the painter F.-X. Fabre were at the centre of a dense network of relationships. The rupture caused by the Revolution deeply marked the poet’s existential and intellectual path. This analysis unfolds through the pages of his *Life*, his letters, his epigraphs, his wills, the testimonies of his contemporaries, and the international guests of that salon/theatre of the Palazzina sull’Arno, a fragile bulwark against the threats of the outside world, amid the anguish for the library dispersed in Paris, the flight, and the nagging for the one to be reconstructed in Florence; the disagreement with the present, the object of bitter irony in the Satires and the Comedies, and the search for his own identity in the timeless past of the classics in the name of the “nobility” of letters. In the years following Alfieri’s death, the new scenarios that emerged, which also led to the transfer of the painstakingly reconstructed library to France, determined the reception of his works for a long time to come.