

Summaries

Francesca Cantore, *Sordi before Sordi. Formation and Metamorphosis of an Italian Mask*

This essay reconstructs the early stages of Alberto Sordi's career, from the mid-1930s to the early 1950s, tracing the stylistic and thematic roots of the "Sordi character" before his consecration as an icon of Italian cinema. Through an analysis of the actor's multifaceted training – developed in variety theatre, dubbing, *avanspettacolo*, and radio – the essay shows that the defining traits of his comic persona were already emerging in this period: expressionistic physicality, mastery of spoken rhythm, and the construction of morally ambiguous figures.

Keywords: Alberto Sordi, Italian cinema, *commedia all'italiana*, artistic formation

Silvia Vacirca, *Italian fashion on screen: the press debate (1935-1939)*

During the second half of the 1930s, debates began to circulate widely in the Italian film press on how to capitalize on Italian high fashion in order to develop and promote a national film style and, through it, an explicitly "Italian" form of stardom. This essay examines the principal fashion and film columns in the leading Italian film magazines of the period, focusing on the expanding discursive space devoted to the wardrobes of Italian stars. It analyzes how these articles articulated, from multiple perspectives, the perceived need for closer collaboration between the film and fashion industries as a strategic means of shaping both cinematic style and national identity.

Keywords: fashion, cinema, fascism, Italy, stardom, identity

Barbara Montesi, *A justified presence? Female students, cinematography, fascist Italy (1939-1943)*

The article examines the quite significant number of films with a collegiate setting that were released in the years between the 1930s and 1940s. The protagonists of these films were young female students, who were played by equally young actresses such as Adriana Benetti, Carla Del Poggio, Irasema Dilian, Chiaretta Gelli, Lilia Silvi and, above all, Alida Valli. Starting from the analysis of the plots of these films, the article investigates the figure of the high school girl in fascist Italy, instituting a dialogue with the generational and gender models of the time, which are discussed in relation to the emergence of a commercial youth culture that identified the teenager as a precise target. The reflection is based on a reading of the major film periodicals of the time – focussing in particular on

the roles of mediation and connection that they played between the young stars and their fans – and on an examination of the archives of Alida Valli and Lilia Silvi.

Keywords: Fascism, female students, cinematography, fandom, cultural consumption

Stephen Gundle, *Doris Duranti, fascino and fascism. Function and contradictions of the femme fatale of Italian cinema, 1936-43*

Doris Duranti is remembered as one of a handful of screen actresses who was personally associated with the fascist regime and with the Italian Social Republic. In later years, through interviews and a volume of memoirs, she embraced the image of the fascist film star par excellence. This article highlights the contradictions of her screen image as a femme fatale who often played ethnic Others in propaganda films and who herself was of partly Jewish background. It locates her persona in relation to American ideas of glamour as they were received in Italy and considers the role of the producer Eugenio Fontana in working with these to fashion a personality who, despite an anti-conformist reputation, was useful to the regime. Duranti's career offers a way of reading the development of the Italian star system under fascism and of understanding why so few stars of the period were able to successfully revive their careers after 1945.

Keywords: glamour, fascino, film stardom, colonial cinema, Italian fascism

Ester Capuzzo, *Ines Donati, Nationalism, Fascism, female Squadrist, March on Rome*

In the immediate post-war period, Ines Donati, a young woman from the Marche region, arrived in Rome. In the capital, she became politically active, joining several nationalist associations and adopting attitudes linked to the masculine spirit of early fascism, despite not participating in fascist women's organizations. She was involved in several fascist squad actions, such as the one against the Socialist deputy Della Seta, and participated in the March on Rome. She was marginalized by fascism for her behavior inconsistent with the regime's ideals of femininity, but in the 1930s her memory was revived posthumously and held up as a perfect example of Italian femininity.

Keywords: Ines Donati, Nationalism, Fascism, female Squadrist, March on Rome