

Fascist modernisation of meteorology led to its progressive professionalisation and militarisation through the creation of the Meteorological Service of the Regia Aeronautica.

The volume continues with four further chapters (8 to 11) that deal with the relationship between Fascist institutions and Italian society. Roberta Pergher's essay moves from the controversial political status of colonial subjects in Libya to reflect more broadly on Fascist concepts of citizenship, specifically on the way in which the Fascist state 'claimed the individual for itself, depriving him of all power at the same time' (p. 192). Ilaria Pavan looks at the Fascist welfare state and ponders continuities and discontinuities with the social policies of liberal Italy, as well as at the territorial, gender, and racial fractures on which the social initiatives of the regime were grounded. Adopting a bottom-up approach, Joshua Arthurs reflects on the use of the Fascist badge, its deep ideological, symbolic, and political value, and its impact on the daily life of the population. Alessio Gagliardi's chapter follows, investigating the adaptation of mass media to the needs of the dictatorship, the link between the Fascist desire to revolutionise society and the transformation of the propaganda apparatus, and the response of the Italians to this propaganda.

The volume concludes with two essays on antifascism and the reception of Fascism outside the national borders – with a focus on Western Europe – written respectively by Marco Bresciani and Giulia Albanese. These function to stress the link between the internal construction of the Blackshirts' regime and 'what happened against and outside it' (p. 15). Two absentees stand out – namely, a chapter on racism and antisemitism and a chapter on gender – which, however, the editor acknowledges and justifies in the introduction. A partial solution is given to this inconvenience since these macro-themes, although not analysed systematically, emerge transversely in several of the 13 chapters of the book.

Ultimately, *Il fascismo italiano* is a work by no means trivial at a time when the diffusion of the concept of 'global fascism' – certainly useful for investigations on a larger scale – sometimes produces the side effect of blurring the core elements of this phenomenon, diluting the meaning of the term 'fascism' until it disappears. While positioning itself in continuity with the vast existing literature on the interpretation of the fascist phenomenon, Giulia Albanese's volume presents us with innovative aspects, which contribute to making it a reference text for experts and students of fascism.

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Holy War: The Untold Story of Catholic Italy's Crusade Against the Ethiopian Orthodox Church

by Ian Campbell, London, Hurst, 2021, xxxi + 449 pp., £30 (hardback), ISBN 9781787384774

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Holy War is an important book connecting the history of Italian colonialism, the Vatican's relationship with Fascism, and the longer trajectory of contacts between the Catholic and the Ethiopian Orthodox Churches. It expands on the author's trilogy on Italian colonial violence in Ethiopia between 1935 and 1942: *The Plot to Kill Graziani* (2010), *The Massacre*

of *Debre Libanos* (2014), and *The Addis Ababa Massacre* (2016). In this volume, Campbell offers an innovative and thought-provoking reading of the entanglement between religion and colonialism in Ethiopia under Italian occupation.

The argument of the book is that the destruction of churches and the persecution of the Ethiopian clergy were part of a modern crusade waged by the Italians against the Ethiopian Orthodox Church with the support of the Catholic Church. The book reframes the infamous massacre of the monastery of Debre Libanos from an exceptionally violent episode of colonial violence ordered by the viceroy Rodolfo Graziani to the tip of the iceberg in a much larger and systematic campaign of terror that has been largely undocumented or underestimated in the archival record. Campbell's most innovative and original contribution is to integrate Italian state sources with interviews with Ethiopian survivors and on-the-ground fieldwork on the sites of massacres, which are illustrated with several maps and photographic evidence from the time. This approach allows Campbell to reconstruct in detail the sobering account of widespread violence that the Italians perpetrated in several Ethiopian provinces, where local information about these massacres has been largely ignored by historians.

After a prelude summarising relations between the Catholic and the Ethiopian Orthodox Churches in the past, the author reconstructs the 'unholy alliance' between the Vatican and Fascist Italy ahead of the invasion of Ethiopia. Building on the work of Lucia Ceci, Emma Fattorini, and David Kertzer, Campbell explains how the Vatican shifted from friendliness to condemnation of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church as a schismatic institution in the months ahead of Italy's invasion of Ethiopia. Because of the Holy See's commitment to the alliance with Mussolini, Pope Pius XI adopted a policy of vacillation towards the invasion that was meant to reassure the international Catholic community while letting the Italian clergy stir excitement for a modern crusade in support of Italian imperialism. The beatification of Giustino de Jacobis, a Catholic bishop who had served in Ethiopia in the mid-nineteenth century, statements by influential Italian clergymen such as Cardinal Schuster, Archbishop of Milan, and the cultivation of the myths of the *Madonna del Manganello* and Father Andrea Giuliani strongly suggested that the Italian clergy saw in Mussolini's invasion of Ethiopia an opportunity to expand the Catholic faith against a branch of Christianity that was considered backward, heretical, and far too close to Jewish ritual practices. In short, the Catholic Church sided with the Fascist regime to promote popular support for a colonial crusade.

The core of the book examines the destruction of churches and monasteries during the 1935–6 campaign and the subsequent repression of Ethiopian patriots by Italian soldiers and their Muslim troops. Campbell points out that these attacks were often distant from the main military theatres, but churches were lucrative targets for pillage during the invasion. While Marshal Badoglio tried to limit the destruction of churches as a future hindrance to the pacification of Ethiopia, Graziani reversed this policy because he considered religious sites as ideal for exemplary reprisals against the Ethiopian resistance. A key example is Campbell's analysis of the Debre Libanos massacre, during which Graziani ordered the slaughter of 1,800 to 2,200 innocent people, including monks, visitors, pilgrims, and students who were at the site for a religious holiday and had no connection with the plot to kill the Italian viceroy. Campbell demonstrates that the number of victims was underreported in Graziani's telegrams to Rome, as he tried to cover up his actions by imprisoning about 360 residents of Debre Libanos and family members of the executed clergy in Somalia. Thus, Campbell brilliantly completes patchy Italian archival records with his research on the ground and convincingly demonstrates that the destruction of churches in the Addis Ababa and Debre Libanos massacres were only the most famous cases in a much broader strategy of colonial violence against the Ethiopian Orthodox Church.

Finally, the book examines the reversal of Italian religious policy in Ethiopia under viceroy Amedeo d'Aosta, who aimed at turning the Ethiopian Orthodox Church into a tool of Italian occupation. After Graziani, Italians switched tactic from destroying the Ethiopian Church to pausing Catholic proselytisation, appointing new Orthodox clergymen who were autonomous from the Egyptian Orthodox Church, and even rebuilding churches and monasteries. This change of strategy caused the disappointment of the Catholic Church and Italian missionaries already sent to Ethiopia.

Holy War opens up several new perspectives for future research. For example, Campbell asks how many Ethiopian religious artifacts are still in Italy illegally, an important topic at a time when former colonial powers negotiate the return of looted artifacts of artistic and cultural significance. Additionally, the book is bound to stir a debate about the use of the word 'pogrom' to describe Italy's crusade in Ethiopia. The author suggests that the collaboration between Italian clergy and the Fascist state degraded the image of Ethiopians and the Orthodox Church to the point that reluctant Italians were successfully mobilised to volunteer in the campaign in the name of their faith. The vast impunity of Italian soldiers confirmed that their violence served a right and just cause. Still, the question remains as to whether Italy's crusade against the Ethiopian Orthodox Church was a spontaneous religious persecution or a series of actions planned by the state with the support of higher Catholic hierarchies. In short, how pervasive and successful was the message of the crusade in Italian society? In conclusion, *Holy War* stands out as one of the most important recent contributions to the history of Italian colonialism, Fascism, and their relationship with the Catholic Church. The book is an invaluable testament that preserves the voices of Ethiopian survivors of Italian colonial violence in the historical record.

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Le conseguenze economiche delle leggi razziali

by Ilaria Pavan, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2022, 320 pp., €25 (paperback), ISBN 9788815295002

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Ilaria Pavan's book is noteworthy for many reasons. First, it gives the most complete and up-to-date insight into the economic consequences of the anti-Jewish persecution by the Fascist regime. The author, drawing on extensive archival and bibliographic sources and an in-depth knowledge of historiography and the public debate, retraces the key steps that led to the exclusion of Italian Jews from all aspects of civil life and the confiscation of their property, beginning with the first laws passed in 1938–9 (when Fascism was at the height of its power) to the tragic conclusion of the Italian Social Republic of 1943–5, with large-scale arrests and expropriations of Jews and their delivery to the Nazis for deportation and extermination in the death camps.

The second reason that makes the book an interesting read is that it continues the story after 1945 and the reintegration by the newly established Italian Republic of the