

The March on Rome

The aim of this book is to reconstruct the violent nature of the March on Rome and to emphasise its significance in demarcating a real break in the country's history and the beginning of the Fascist dictatorship. This aspect of the March has long been obscured: first by the Fascists' celebratory project, and then by the ironic and reductive interpretation of the event put forward by anti-Fascists.

This volume focuses on the role and purpose of Fascist political violence from its origins. In doing so, it highlights the conflictual nature of the March by illustrating the violent impact it had on Italian institutions as well as the importance of a debate on this political turning point in Italy and beyond. The volume also examines how the event crucially contributed to the construction of a dictatorial political regime in Italy in the weeks following Mussolini's appointment as head of the government.

Originally published in Italian, this book fills a notable gap in current critical discussion surrounding the March in the English language.

Giulia Albanese is Associate Professor at the University of Padua. Her research focuses on the origins of Fascism, political violence and authoritarian cultures in the interwar years. Her previous books include *Dittature mediterranee. Sovversioni fasciste e colpi di stato in Italia, Spagna, Portogallo* (2016). With Roberta Pergher, she edited *In the Society of Fascists: Acclamation, Acquiescence and Agency in Mussolini's Italy* (2012).

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The March on Rome

Violence and the Rise of Italian Fascism

Giulia Albanese

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The English edition of this volume is dedicated to my husband, Simon Levis Sullam – who has provided support at different stages of this project by discussing with me the topics I was investigating – and to the many things we share.

Preface

Rain, rain, and more rain. Little food, not enough tents and few weapons. The Fascist squads assembled north of Rome to attack the capital are weary, soaked and hungry when, on the afternoon of 29 October, the news of Mussolini's appointment as head of the government breaks.

Over the previous days, men, most of them from Tuscany, have been pouring into the five small towns in central Italy (Tivoli, Monterotondo, Santa Marinella, Foligno, Valmontone and Civitavecchia), chosen as rallying points for the squads heading to Rome. Men have also been assembling in Perugia, the headquarters of the anticipated revolution. However, on 28 October all preparatory actions are suddenly brought to a halt by orders of the Fascist leadership of the coup, the *quadrumvirate*. Only the assaults on army barracks to stock up the inadequate Fascist arsenal continue. Thus the *squadristi* assembled in the small city of Foligno, near Perugia, are sent to the nearby city of Spoleto, 28 km to the south, with the order to ransack the city's military depot. Their mission proves successful in no small measure owing to the complete lack of defence put up by the commander and guards. Meanwhile, tension is rising at the rallying points: having heeded the call to participate in a heroic act, the *squadristi* now find themselves held back at the gates of Rome, caught in a fruitless and – in their eyes – unjustified wait. Some men disobey orders. On the morning of 29 October, a group attempts to occupy a fort in the Monte Mario district in Rome; unlike their colleagues in Spoleto, they are stopped by the army and forced to withdraw.

The news of Mussolini's appointment reaches the *squadristi* as they are expecting the order to enter the capital to be given at any moment. Instead, they now wait for Mussolini, who has boarded a train in Milan and is en route to Rome to assume his post as Prime Minister. Some squads, however, start heading towards the capital. Among them are the columns organised by generals Fara, Ceccherini and De Bono, comprising around 16,000 *squadristi*.

At 1.30 pm on 30 October, these men finally arrive in Rome. The army troops restraining them at various checkpoints are ordered to let them through. The *squadristi* thus do not conquer their way into the city, but their entry follows an invitation of sorts. Nor do they march. Instead, part of them reach the capital by train and they are housed and fed in barracks and schools

by express order of the King of Italy and the new Prime Minister. The ‘takeover’ of the capital, thus, does not look as the Fascist command and its men had imagined it. The Fascists have won – they are now in Rome; but they have not conquered the city and their deed is devoid of even a veneer of heroism. Though inside the capital, the *squadristi* have by no means seized power or taken control of the city. No longer having to fight the State, the *squadristi* must fight the anti-Fascists, who will not acquiesce to the Fascist occupation of their neighbourhoods. The working-class district of San Lorenzo does not surrender to them, nor do the other working-class neighbourhoods such as Prenestina, Nomentana and Borgo Pio, or of the Via Trionfale area. The Fascists struggle to occupy hostile places, as their opponents fight back.

Nonetheless, the Fascist attack on Rome takes a heavy toll as episodes of violence shake working-class neighbourhoods. Fascists pour castor oil down the throats of political enemies, destroy the houses of anti-Fascist deputies, torch party headquarters, newspaper offices and People’s Houses and beat their occupants. The police give the Fascists complete freedom of action: the forces of law and order reach the riot sites when the clashes are over and simply show up to count the dead, carry away the wounded and try to arrest the people responsible, who for the most part are identified as anti-Fascists.

Despite the severe fighting during these days, Mussolini’s first measure after coming into power is to withdraw the army and announce that all is quiet in the capital. The city is far from peaceful, but the important thing is to give people across Italy the impression that it is. Such is the conclusion to the events that make up the March on Rome.

If we now consider the actions carried out by the Fascists in other parts of Italy at the same time, and link them to the Fascist strategy of the months before, what happened in Rome turns out to be far more complex and far less reckless and fortuitous than has often been suggested.

As tens of thousands of men are heading to Rome, in many cities across Italy the *squadristi* who are not ordered to reach Rome occupy (often only as a formal gesture) the main seats of power and transport hubs linking urban centres to their periphery and to the capital of the country. They impede Prefects from maintaining public order, even holding them hostage for a few hours; they block post and telegraph offices and attempt – successfully, at times – to stop trains and close down stations, to prevent the circulation of news and police mobilisation.

When it becomes clear that Mussolini has been appointed as head of government, the Fascists escalate the violence they have unleashed over the last few months. The *squadristi* occupy the headquarters of local public administrations that have opposed Fascism, threatening, beating or banishing from their towns and cities notable anti-Fascists – not just Socialists and Communists, but also members of the Partito Popolare Italiano, the Catholic party, and even a few liberals. They occupy and in some cases destroy the headquarters not just of anti-Fascist newspapers, but even of independent ones. In this context, twenty-two people die as a consequences of the Fascist action.

The Fascist strategy proves successful, chiefly because it goes unchallenged. And it has a massive impact: it once again proves the reluctance or incapacity of the liberal State to react to threats and to defend some of its fundamental principles, such as freedom of the press, freedom of expression and of association, as well as the State's monopoly of force. In fact, what is taking place is the destruction of the liberal State – even at an institutional level, a process that is gradually completed over the following months.

At the time, however, with some exceptions, most Italians viewed the March on Rome as one of those sudden events that create a huge stir without really affecting the institutions or power relations. Even those who realised the subversive potential of the event believed that it was nothing new, that the March on Rome and its outcome were ultimately in keeping with liberal institutions and politics, or at any rate that it was best to downplay its significance, hoping that trying to normalise what was happening would be enough to maintain a balance in the country.

In many respects, the March on Rome is a surprising event, which has often been recounted, yet for a long time was seldom investigated: until recently few historians have attempted to analyse its significance, the reasons behind it, and its role in the history of Italy. The actions of the *squadristi* and the extent of the violence perpetrated in those days have mostly been underestimated and overlooked, except by historians working for the Fascist regime. They – for evident reasons of propaganda – examined the whole episode in a highly selected manner, ignoring the clashes between Fascists and the police and highlighting the heroism and anti-Socialist efforts of the *squadristi*.¹ In their accounts, the March was presented either as the revolution or as the beginning of the Fascist revolution, and in any case as the beginning of a new era, the Fascist one. While creating the myth of the March, Mussolini tried to conceal the subversive aspect of this event, in order to remove any idea that it was possible to subvert his government from within or from below. The images of the March on Rome, those which were intended to reach a national and international public, were carefully checked in order to develop a message that was acceptable to and controlled by the dictator.

While the March was still taking place, the leaders of the Socialist Party and the Popolari – not to mention the liberal ruling class – were not convinced that the March represented a watershed in the political and institutional situation of the country. On the contrary, they thought that Fascist rule would not last, and hence failed to react to the events. This was confirmed by their broad participation in the coalition government organised by Mussolini and by the absence of any reaction to the violent speech with which he asked for a vote of confidence for his government.

For many of those who were, or were to become, active anti-Fascists – and in opposition to the claims made by the Fascists, who labelled the March a 'revolution' – the real turning point in Italian history came with the assassination of Socialist MP Giacomo Matteotti and the speech delivered by

Mussolini on 3 January 1925, in which he claimed responsibility for the violence committed by the Fascists.

Even in anti-Fascist publications during the Fascist regime, most of which were published abroad and in languages other than Italian, the focus was more on the conflicts and violence in the period before the March on Rome, on the limitations and falsehood of the Fascist propaganda about the government, or at any rate on the limits of the late October events.

This was even the case for those anti-Fascists, like Salvemini, who sought to analyse the events in greater detail after they happened. Salvemini refused to describe them as a revolution and was convinced, at least at first, that what had occurred was a *coup d'état* carried out with the support of the military establishment.² Few anti-Fascists saw the March while it was happening as an epoch-making event; among those who did was Luigi Salvatorelli, who described it in such terms in the pages of the newspaper 'La Stampa' as early as 1923.³

Subsequently, as late as 1931, the anti-Fascist Emilio Lussu emphasised Mussolini's choice to remain in Milan during the March as a sign of his readiness to escape to Switzerland in the event of a failure. Moreover, aiming to propose an anti-heroic view of the event, he underlined that Mussolini was not with the squads but that he travelled comfortably to Rome by train.⁴ This interpretation of the March in a way agreed with the conclusions of those who believed that the event was not a real watershed in the history of Italy.

In the post-WWII period, the history of the Fascist takeover was largely reduced to the parliamentary negotiations that led to the resignation of the Facta government in the days of the Congress of Naples and to the King's appointment of Mussolini as the head of the new government.⁵ Even after WWII, the March on Rome was thus largely overlooked, as other events – including the resistance – were perceived to be the key moments in which defeat or victory had been more heroic or meaningful, and thus more worth recounting.

Many historians have emphasised the institutional continuity rather than the divergences between the Facta and Mussolini governments. They have thus tended to regard the March on Rome as a bluff rather than an event which had a strong political impact and which deserves to be studied as such. Moreover, many works have stressed the complicity and the many backroom agreements between the Fascist leaders and the liberal ones, the connivance of a substantial sector of the army, and the support of the King to the Fascist cause at the outset of the March.

While all these elements have always held true, as early as the 1980s Adrian Lyttelton noted that what makes it so difficult to interpret the March on Rome is precisely the originality of the strategy deployed by the Fascists to seize power. Given the ambiguity of the event, it was easy to forget that – more than any other event – the March marked the beginning of the Fascist dictatorship.⁶

What made the March on Rome possible? What was the objective? What role did violence play in the March on Rome? How did the March change the political context? Why did only some sections of the police force react, while others did not? Why did the political ruling class believe that nothing particularly

relevant was taking place in Italy in those days? These are the questions that the present book seeks to answer.

Two elements clearly emerged over the course of this enquiry. The first – revealed by a further engagement with Salvemini's thesis of the March on Rome as a *coup d'état* – is the existence of widespread authoritarian and dictatorial tendencies in post-WWI Italy. The second element is the fact that the formula 'March on Rome' has overshadowed the events which were not part of the actual March and entrance of the *squadristi* into Rome. Yet the most noteworthy events related to the March are the many occupations of towns and cities, and particularly of Prefectures, post offices and stations in every corner of Italy. These shows of strength reveal that the March itself had a very different geography and impact from what is generally assumed.

The central thesis of this book is that Mussolini's government marked the beginning of dictatorship in Italy and the end of its liberal institutions.⁷ In the days and months immediately following the March, the Fascists were free to threaten one of the chief State institutions, Parliament, without meeting any opposition from the liberal ruling class. Immediately afterwards, a broad parliamentary majority passed an unconstitutional law, approving the establishment of a private militia, the *Milizia volontaria per la sicurezza nazionale*, under the Prime Minister's control. Parliament also ratified a law curtailing freedom of expression and print, as well as an electoral law entailing a reform of the Italian representative system and the 'granting of constituent power' to Fascism.⁸ These laws were even voted for by some of those MPs who opposed Fascism in the belief that this was the best way to play the political game with the Fascists.

The aim of this book is to reconsider the March on Rome with an awareness of the different interpretative perspectives according to which it has been analysed, and most importantly by freshly re-examining the sources. This event reveals how far an institutional transformation can take place without such a change being clearly understood by those witnessing it.

In this study, much attention has been paid to the ways in which violence shaped political positions and choices not just in the period leading up to the March but also during the event itself and in its aftermath. This book demonstrates the extent to which violence constituted the cornerstone of Fascist action, even within Parliament, and how it affected or even determined the choices of the liberal ruling class, as well as of anti-Fascists.

The attention to the role played by violence during this event is consistent with the broader reconsideration of the role of violence in the history of Fascism which has been taking place since the 1990s. The publication in 1990 of George Mosse's *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars*, marked in fact a turning point in the interpretation of the role of violence in the inter-war period.⁹ The brutalisation thesis has since been called into question, yet at the time it offered a refreshing starting point since it developed new hypotheses on the origins of the political use of violence and provided a wider reconsideration of the militarisation and brutalisation of

politics, focusing on the effects of WWI.¹⁰ In the case of Italy, this thesis brought to light the importance and role of the violent action of the *squadristi* from the very beginning of the Fascist movement. It also highlighted the role of the party militia in the development of Fascism and hence the structural function of violence at the origin of Fascism, its central role with respect to the seizing of new political spaces, the winning of the consent of the Italian public, and the creation of new bonds among the *squadristi*.¹¹

Mosse's perspective, therefore, also had a huge impact on the research on the origin of Italian Fascism. On the one hand, it created a picture in which it was necessary to consider what had happened on the peninsula through a broader comparative analysis, of the sort conducted in many different ways over the following years. In particular, when this present book was about to be issued in Italy, the German scholar Sven Reichardt published his comparative analysis on the Fascist squads and the German SA, showing the fundamental role of Fascist violence at the origin of Italian Fascism and its great impact on the development of the regime.¹² This comparison allowed Reichardt to point out that violence had a greater impact on the crisis of Italian liberal democracy than it had on the final stages of the Weimar Republic, thereby suggesting new possible terms of comparison between the two Fascist cases. On the other hand, the brutalisation thesis also made it possible to rethink existing research on WWI and on the years leading up to it, showing the importance of acts of violence, authoritarianism and totalitarianism both before and during the war.¹³ These new strands of interpretation certainly were enhanced and reshaped by this new historiographical context. In the following years, more research was published on the role of violence in the period prior to the establishment of the Italian Fascist regime. Fabio Fabbri's *Le origini della guerra civile* analysed the role and use of violence by the Socialists and by the State, as well as by the *squadristi*, in the period between the end of the war and 1921. This book also reopened the discussion around the possible definition of this period as one of civil war, focusing on the contemporaries' representation and usage of these words.¹⁴ Following this renewed focus on violence, more research was also carried out on violence under the regime, for instance with Michael Ebner's *Ordinary Violence in Mussolini's Italy*, as well as on the endurance of *squadrisimo* well beyond the alleged attempt to normalise the movement – as illustrated by Matteo Millan's *Squadrisimo e squadristi nella dittatura fascista*, which highlighted the importance of *squadrisimo* as a means to stabilise the Italians' acquiescence towards the regime.¹⁵ Finally, the acts of violence perpetrated in the colonies and during the war have received more attention.

As for the March on Rome, Italian public memory continues to struggle with the idea that it constituted a turning point in the history of the country and a violent takeover of political power (albeit one legitimised by the highest political institutions), even though historians are more and more agreeing on this interpretation. In the early 1990s, Mario Isnenghi published a short article in his Italian version of the *Lieux de Mémoire*, in which he reflected on

the Italians' difficulty to take this momentous event of their history as a dramatic break in the history of the country and looked at the ways in which the March had been represented both by contemporary witnesses and by historians to demonstrate that.¹⁶ The essays helped to focus historians' attention on the March and its significance and provided an important stimulus for more research. It led scholars to analyse how deep the impact of the events encapsulated by the label 'March on Rome' was and to reflect on and affirm its importance as a turning point in the history of the country. The thesis presented in Isnenghi's book was not uncontested. Nonetheless, some years after the publication of the book, Emilio Gentile himself published a study, *E fu subito regime*, which partially differed from the interpretation provided in *Storia del partito fascista*, the first volume of an unfinished history of the Fascist Party, published in 1989. In this first volume, the March on Rome had been almost completely overlooked, while in the volume published on the 90th anniversary of the event, it was presented as the starting point of the Fascist dictatorship.¹⁷

Since the March on Rome stands as an important critical juncture in Italian history, new research and interpretations will continue to be developed. For now, I am very happy that this book will also be available to a wider international public. In the present edition I have extensively revised the text published in Italian in 2006, in order to make it more accessible to a non-Italian public, while updating some references and rewriting part of the prologue and the conclusion. The latter in the Italian edition attempted to reflect on some possible comparisons that I have since developed in a new study published in Italian under the title *Dittature mediterranee. Sovversioni fasciste e colpi di stato in Italia, Spagna e Portogallo*.¹⁸ Here I have chosen to present some recent reflections on the European impact of the March on Rome, since the Italian events of October 1922, far from representing an isolated turning point in a faraway and southern extension of the European continent, became a central force of political change in the following years.

Giulia Albanese
Venice/Padua, August 2018

Notes

- 1 The historiographical tendency to underestimate the use of violence during the March on Rome may be traced back to Angelo Tasca, who was nonetheless one of the first of Fascism to draw attention to its violent politics: see A. Tasca, *Nascita e avvento del fascismo*, Bari, Laterza, 1972 [1938], esp. p. 476. On the Fascist historiography of the March on Rome and this ambivalent attitude towards the founding event of Fascism, see M. Isnenghi, 'La marcia su Roma', in M. Isnenghi (ed.), *I luoghi della memoria. Strutture ed eventi dell'Italia unita*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 1997, and G. Albanese, 'Reconsidering the March on Rome', *European History Quarterly*, vol. 42, no. 3, 2012, pp. 403–21.

- 2 See the evolving interpretations of the anti-Fascist intellectuals: G. Salvemini, *The Fascist Dictatorship in Italy*, London, Jonathan Cape, 1928, his diary of those days, published posthumously, *Memorie e soliloqui. Diario 1922–1923*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2001, in particular p. 36, as well as his lectures in Harvard, delivered around 1943, and available in Salvemini, *The Origins of Fascism in Italy*, London, Harper & Lee, 1973.
- 3 These articles were then published in 1923 in L. Salvatorelli, *Nazionalfascismo*, Turin, Einaudi, 1977 [1923].
- 4 E. Lussu, *The March on Rome and Thereabouts: An Autobiographical Account by a Leading Sardinian Republican Politician of Resistance to Fascism in Sardinia from 1918–1930*, Lewinston (NY), Edwin Mellen, 1992.
- 5 The main exceptions to this perspective are A. Lyttelton, *The Seizure of Power: Fascism in Italy 1919–1929*, London, Routledge, 2009 [1974]; G. Santomassimo, *La marcia su Roma*, Florence, Giunti, 2000; M. Saija, *I prefetti italiani nella crisi dello stato liberale*, Milan, Giuffrè, 2001; M. Isnenghi, *L'Italia in piazza. I luoghi della vita pubblica dal 1848 ai giorni nostri*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2004 [1994].
- 6 Lyttelton, *The Seizure of Power*, pp. 77–93. The definition of the March of Rome as a *coup d'état* was also taken up, albeit less frequently, in the post-war period: for the main juridical and historiographical interpretations of the phenomenon in such terms, see S. Tosi, *Il colpo di stato*, Rome, Gismondi, 1951, and G. Candeloro, *Storia dell'Italia moderna. VIII. La prima guerra mondiale, il dopoguerra, l'avvento del fascismo*, Milan, Feltrinelli, 1979, in particular p. 416.
- 7 Lyttelton, *The Seizure of Power*. See also, more recently, Gentile, *E fu subito regime*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 2012.
- 8 The quote is from L. Carlassare, 'La "rivoluzione" fascista e l'ordinamento statutario', *Diritto Pubblico*, no. 1, 1996, pp. 43–62. Much the same interpretative approach is favoured by G. Sabbatucci, 'Il "suicidio" della classe dirigente liberale. La legge Acerbo 1923–1924', *Italia contemporanea*, no. 174, 1989, pp. 57–80.
- 9 G. Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of World Wars*, Oxford University Press, 1990.
- 10 There is a huge literature on this subject. I will only refer to one of the most recent works, which demonstrates the liveliness of this interpretation almost thirty years after its formulation: R. Gerwarth, *The Vanquished: Why the First World War Failed to End, 1917–1923*, London, Allen Lane, 2016.
- 11 On the impact of Mosse's studies in Italy see L. Benadusi and G. Caravale (eds), *George Mosse's Italy: Interpretation, Reception and Intellectual Heritage*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. On Mosse's use of the brutalisation thesis in 1989, see *Storia del partito fascista. 1919–1922. Movimento e milizia*, Rome-Bari, Editori Laterza, 1989, p. 471, where Gentile refers to the 'brutalisation of life', drawing upon Mosse's *Toward the Final Solution: A History of European Fascism*, Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, 1978.
- 12 S. Reichardt, *Faschistische Kampfbünde. Gewalt und Gemeinschaft im italienischen Squadrismus und in der deutschen SA*, Köln/Weimar/Wien, Böhlau, 2002. An Italian edition was published by Il Mulino in 2009.
- 13 A very important study for the Italian case is the book by A. Ventrone, *La seduzione totalitaria. Guerra, modernità, violenza politica (1914–1918)*, Rome, Donzelli, 2003.
- 14 F. Fabbri, *Le origini della guerra civile. L'Italia dalla Grande Guerra al Fascismo, 1918–1921*, Turin, UTET, 2009. The debate on the notion of civil war – also in the years 1919–1922 – was launched by some considerations of Claudio Pavone, put forward in *A Civil War: A History of the Italian Resistance*, London, Verso 2013 [1991]. On this theme see also M. Bresciani, 'L'autunno dell'Italia liberale; una discussione su guerra civile, origini del fascismo e storiografia «nazionale»',

- Storica*, vol. 54, no. 3, 2013, pp. 77–110, and M. Di Figlia, ‘La guerra civile del fascismo’, *Meridiana*, no. 76, 2013, pp. 85–104.
- 15 M. Ebner, *Ordinary Violence in Mussolini’s Italy*, Cambridge University Press, 2016; M. Millan, *Squadrisimo e squadristi nella dittatura fascista*, Rome, Viella, 2016 (and the discussion in *Contemporary European History*, vol. 22, n. 4, 2013).
- 16 Isnenghi, *La marcia su Roma*.
- 17 Gentile, *E fu subito regime*. See also Gentile, *Storia del partito fascista*, in particular pp. 676–680.
- 18 Rome-Bari, Laterza, 2016.

Abbreviations

ACS	Archivio centrale dello stato (National Archives)
APC	Atti Parlamentari della Camera dei Deputati (Proceedings of the Chamber of Deputies)
APS	Atti Parlamentari del Senato (Proceedings of the Senate)
ASSME	Archivio Storico dello Stato Maggiore dell'Esercito (Historical Archives of the Army)
CGdL	Confederazione Generale del Lavoro (General Confederation of Work)
FO	Foreign Office (UK)
MI	Ministero dell'Interno (Ministry of the Interior)
MRF	Mostra della Rivoluzione Fascista (Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution)
MVSN	Milizia Volontaria per la Sicurezza Nazionale (Voluntary Militia for National Security)
PPI	Partito popolare italiano (Italian Popular Party)
PRO	Public Record Office (UK)
PS	Pubblica sicurezza (Public Security)
TUC	Telegrammi Ufficio Cifra (Telegrams and Code Office)

1 The *Coup d'État* Policy

26 September 1919, fourteen days after the poet Gabriele D'Annunzio's *coup de main* on Fiume, the Socialist Anna Kuliscioff wrote to her partner Filippo Turati, one of the leading figures of the Socialist Party:

Even the appeal to the country on whether Fiume should be Italian or not is risky, and the issue is being put off indefinitely, *with the danger that meanwhile the army might launch a coup de main on Rome as well.*

The following day, she continued:

In the political mire of this turbulent political period, it is truly comforting to see that Nitti [the head of government] is taking a stance. Not only is he not going back on his words but he is as resolute as ever before in upholding them in an anti-militarist and anti-war sense, *thereby refuting the theoretical claims made by the bourgeois governments, which can only endure with the help of sharks, militarists and the haute bourgeoisie.*

Even his call for the proletariat to rise up against D'Annunzio's *coups de main* was more than just an empty claim ... It is definitely the case that red or white revolutions in Italy are only ever carried out with the government's consent.¹

A lucid observer, Anna Kuliscioff described the political situation of September 1919 with words that reflect the concern of at least part of the Italian political and intellectual establishment. What had triggered this concern was the rebellion which had led D'Annunzio and his legionaries to seize Fiume/Rijeka – a multilingual and multicultural city, which had previously been part of Austria-Hungary and was now being claimed by Italian nationalists owing to its large Italian-speaking population – essentially with the support of the local troops. But what was also at play was the very nature of the crisis of the Italian institutions and politics, and the possibility of a conservative and authoritarian *coup d'état* in the country.² This concern cannot be dismissed as unfounded, as is shown by the various plans for a nationalist coup hatched in the years 1919–1920.

Seditious plans

In early June 1919, the news of a possible *coup d'état* had become a matter of public debate after having circulated for some time in government circles and among members of the press.

The plan in question was the result of an agreement struck between nationalists, Arditi (veterans from the Italian shock troops) and veteran associations. It had probably been orchestrated by the Duke of Aosta, General Gaetano Giardino, Colonel Giulio Douhet, Gabriele D'Annunzio, Benito Mussolini, Luigi Federzoni, Italo Foschi and Captain Mario Carli, that is by leading figures of the army and of interventionist and nationalists associations, among others.³ The aim of what came to be known as the 'Palazzo Braschi plot' was to seize government headquarters, depose the government and establish a new executive under the control of the army. The disclosure of the plan created a difficult situation for the head of government on account of the possible involvement of the Ministry of War, but also of the Royal Family in the person of the Duke of Aosta, the King's cousin. It is likely that the alleged plotters were forced to disclaim the news of their involvement, and the sovereign himself took a public stance on the matter.⁴

In response to the circulation of this news, the nationalists launched a smear campaign against the government, accusing it of inventing a coup in order to delegitimise the people involved in the plan.⁵ On 13 June 1919, the nationalist newspaper *Idea Nazionale* ran an editorial entitled *The Grotesque Manoeuvre of the 'Coup d'État'*. The article stated:

No doubt, the matter could hardly be any different. Regarding the foolish and coarse tale of the planned coup d'état, let no one be misled into believing that this web of nonsense was conceived and spread simply to amuse the readers ... It is evident that its circulation was intended to be of use for something and someone.⁶

The government's campaign against the planned *coup d'état* not only stood in the way of the political schemes of the nationalists and certain military groups but also made them fear that they would be branded as traitors to the country – a role which up until then they themselves had attributed to the Socialists. Nevertheless, the nationalists' necessity to make their position clear and to avoid marginalisation did not prevent them from publicly endorsing the prospect of an extra-parliamentary solution to the ongoing government crisis. Reflecting on the constitution of the cabinet presided over by the liberal-democrat Francesco Saverio Nitti, who had taken the place of Vittorio Emanuele Orlando, the nationalist newspaper *Il Dovero nazionale* wrote:

With Giolitti's majority, every parliamentary solution will be a compromise and act of cowardice. We find ourselves in such a terrible moment that we need strong hands and strong men. The country must no longer

be governed by the stale electoral oligarchies of the old Italy but by the civilian and military force responsible for its victory. The monarchy is there for a reason: let it appoint a government outside of the moribund parliament and restore the nation's physical and moral strength.⁷

The authorities carried out investigations to ascertain the truth about the plans for a coup. The Prefect of Rome reported to the Ministry of the Interior that the rumours of a plot were well-founded and that the premises of *Idea Nazionale* were being used to hold meetings attended by nationalists as well as members of the armed forces. The Prefect advised against allowing D'Annunzio to visit Rome, while giving his reassurance that any initiatives against the government would meet with failure unless backed by the army.⁸ On the other hand, the news of a conspiracy was denied by the investigations office of the Ministry of the Interior, which declared: 'We are unaware of any secret committees of nationalists and Arditi planning some violent action. The negotiations and agreements that have just begun in these days are taking place openly.'⁹

In his memoirs, written in the immediate aftermath of World War II, Enrico Caviglia, who had been one of the most prominent generals in the Italian army during WWI, confirms the existence of the plot and of wide-scale nationalist mobilisation. These memoirs also confirm that it was supported by the army and navy, as well as by a considerable section of the troops still mobilised in the Venezia Giulia region, which were ready to carry out acts of protest and revolt against the Italian State.¹⁰

Meanwhile, the irredentists and the more zealous nationalists, unexpectedly joined by some far Left groups, hoped for a return to action on different yet compatible fronts: some pushed for revolution within the country, others for Italian control over Dalmatia. In early June, Caviglia reported again that alongside the rumour of a *coup de main* on Palazzo Braschi, news had started circulating of two alleged plans to occupy Split: one organised by General Ottavio Zoppi, who had been in charge of the assault troops during WWI, and had therefore led many of the men who had followed D'Annunzio to Fiume, the other by a section of the Third Army led by the Duke of Aosta. As though to confirm the soundness of these rumours, shortly after they started circulating the government disbanded the Third Army and placed the border area under the control of General Mario Antonio Di Robilant, whose anti-irredentist sentiments were well known.¹¹

A few days after these decisions, when presenting the new government to the Chamber of Deputies in early July, the head of government Francesco Saverio Nitti bemoaned his opponents' attitude. In particular, he openly condemned the nationalists, stressing the subversiveness of their political views and comparing them to the revolutionary parties of the Left:

I often hear the casual remark being made that the Government is too tolerant, that the Government does not exercise enough rigour. Honourable colleagues, I have performed my duty with great firmness, but also with a

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sense of equanimity and justice. I judge the work of those who inflame people's souls in one way just as dangerous as the work of those who inflame it in another. Whipping the workers up to revolt is deplorable. But attempting to undermine the freedom of Parliament is even more deplorable.¹²

The British ambassador to Rome, Rennell Rodd – an external observer, yet not a complete outsider – remarked on the Italian situation when writing to the Minister of Foreign Affairs Lord Curzon:

A very sensational story is being discussed in the press here and will if not stopped by the censor, no doubt find its way to other countries. It is at any rate significant of the general unrest prevailing here and of the tendency among the public to show their impatience with the present modes of government and the degeneracy of Parliament in this country ... Now it would perhaps be superfluous to have submitted to you in an official dispatch a story which is naturally regarded as fantastic were it not that there is apparently a little bit of truth behind it, and that the elaboration of the supposed conspiracy has been built on a certain foundation of fact.¹³

In what was arguably a far from arbitrary move, Rodd discussed the news of the founding of the *Fasci di Combattimento* (and the funding they received) in conjunction with the issue of Fiume and the demonstrations in favour of its annexation, giving a description of the plot:

The practical application of the plot was to begin with a hostile demonstration on a large scale with sig. Orlando and other delegates returned, to be followed by a sort of *coup de main* against the Ministry of the Interior and the Parliament. The constituted authorities were to be deposed, the deputies informed that their mandate had ceased, and those who were regarded as responsible for the disaster of the country, especially the Giolittians and the socialists, were to be arrested. New elections would then beheld, and if the crown opposed the programme, elections for a constituent assembly also. A state of war on the eastern frontier could also be resumed. The executive agents of the plot would be the military associations, which had 800,000 members enrolled, with a fund at their disposal of twelve million lire, subscribed by the great industrial houses in Lombardy, Liguria and Piedmont ...

A few months later, in September–October 1919, rumours of a possible new conspiracy started circulating. Francesco Saverio Nitti publicly denounced the fact that what D'Annunzio and his men were planning against him and his policies was an actual *coup d'état*. At the same time, in response to what was coming to light, from the pages of their newspapers the nationalists and Fascists were once again accusing the government of using these charges to reinforce its power by staging a coup.

The Fiume exploit

The *coup de main* on Fiume contributed to lend substance to the rumours that had been circulating until then. Indeed, since the 'March on Ronchi' organised by D'Annunzio to invade the Croatian town witnessed the involvement not just of the grenadiers but also of many members of the armed forces who ought to have stood in the way of this subversive action.¹⁴ In an address to the Chamber of Deputies, Nitti provided a remarkably harsh reading of the event which reflects a serious concern for the political situation and an awareness of the fact that the real political aim of many of the plotters who had occupied Fiume was to topple the government.¹⁵ In its attempt to resist the pressure of events, the central problem for the Nitti government was to regain control of the army and contain the sedition already at work within its ranks. The head of government discussed this point in two separate moments of his address to the Chamber, showing that he was not afraid of openly denouncing the situation, while bringing Italian public opinion face to face with a previously unforeseen prospect:

What has happened has filled me with sadness, but also humiliation, because for the first time sedition has crept into the Italian army, albeit for idealistic reasons ... An action carried out by volunteers is one thing, the involvement of soldiers from the regular army quite another. A soldier who breaks the discipline, albeit for a lofty purpose, goes against the country. Anyone who leads a soldier to carry out acts of sedition – albeit with blandishments, far from vulgar aims and out of idealistic tendencies – pits him against his country.¹⁶

Nitti's address was all the more significant because it linked the early June plot to what was taking place in Fiume, in an effort to portray all attempts made to overthrow the government over the previous months in the same light:

Over the past three months I have noticed a chain of facts that began with street riots and displays of crazed excitement, continued with expeditions to seize public buildings and take control of the city of Rome (as in the case of the Pietralata adventure), and ended with events, such the present one, which have highly emotional but also highly dangerous motives behind them.¹⁷

As already noted, and as emphasised by Anna Kuliscioff in her letter to Turati, Nitti ended his speech with a plea to the proletariat: 'I turn, therefore, to the anonymous masses, to the workers and peasants so that the great voice of the people may emerge as an admonition to all to keep to the path of renunciation and duty.'¹⁸

Nitti's address reflected some of the unresolved dilemmas in the history of united Italy that in the aftermath of WWI had become pressing issues, arguably

for the first time. How could the need to solve the conflict between political movements and the authorities in favour of the latter be reconciled with the history of a State, such as liberal Italy, whose founding myths had sprung from the actions of Garibaldi's volunteers during the *Risorgimento*? In stressing the fundamental difference between an army of volunteers and seditious soldiers from the regular army, Nitti was seeking to avoid any possible comparison between Garibaldi's troops and those of D'Annunzio.¹⁹ However, the name of Garibaldi could clearly be heard coming from the right-hand side of the Chamber when Nitti stated: 'it is not by conceiving an exploit in the nature of a raid, something between the romantic and the literary, that one determines the fortune of one's country'.²⁰

The reference to Garibaldi was not a mere rhetorical device, given that the matter-of-fact Prime Minister himself made sure to undermine any possible identification between the two ventures and that the comparison between Garibaldi's exploit and D'Annunzio's one was a recurrent motif in the speeches held in the Chamber of Deputies on that day.²¹ The *Risorgimento* was not a distant historical memory but a source of debate, disagreement and contrasting positions with regard to the contemporary situation – in other words, it was a means to legitimise or delegitimise political movements or decisions.²²

A few days after Nitti's speech and the debate that ensued from it, D'Annunzio explicitly compared his own feat to Garibaldi's. Writing to the editor-in-chief of the moderate newspaper *Corriere della Sera*, Luigi Albertini, he stated: 'General Badoglio himself [whom in November Nitti was to appoint special commissioner for Venezia Giulia, and hence for the Fiume affair] thinks that this is *the finest exploit ever attempted after that of the Thousand* [that is, Garibaldi's volunteers].'²³ This statement clearly reveals the degree to which sedition had found its way into the ranks of the army. Besides, Albertini's own correspondence provides an important testimony on the situation of the military and the fear of sedition. At about the same time, General Cadorna, who had been Chief of Staff of the Italian Army from the beginning of the war until the Caporetto defeat in 1917, shared his opinion on the events which had just taken place with the editor-in-chief of the *Corriere della Sera*:

I was expecting D'Annunzio not to stay put. Leaving aside the patriotic motive, for the country this is a leap in the dark. The insubordination of the army, with the poor example given by officers, including senior ones, is most deplorable in itself and on account of its future consequences. And to think that I have been criticised for my coercive discipline! Do they believe they can now re-establish it with caresses? They have despatched Badoglio there with full powers. But what if the troops he brings along with him fraternise with D'Annunzio's men? It's a nasty risk and – even it were to come to nothing – a nasty precedent!²⁴

For Cadorna, the Fiume event, while undesirable, seemed to go in the hoped-for direction, insofar as it revealed the impossibility of preserving military

discipline with a democratic government, thereby suggesting the need for an authoritarian one.²⁵

D'Annunzio's exploit gave the opposition a fresh opportunity to launch a tirade on the politicisation of the army and the predictability of the *coup de main*, and hence on the responsibilities of the government.²⁶ Socialist MP Guido Marangoni, who in the post-war period belonged to Serrati's maximalist current, stated in a speech delivered just after Nitti's address:

Honourable Nitti, you have trusted the information which reached you from the military front, from the heads of the army placed in command of our troops along the armistice line or near it. I certainly do not wish to accuse those people of disloyalty – an accusation I would regard as absolutely unfounded – but the pages by the Commission of Inquiry so clearly speak of their way of thinking and intellectual sharpness that a truly sharp and intelligent man such as yourself ought to have checked that information from a military source a little more closely ... Be that as it may, the symptoms were visible throughout Italy. There were newspapers waging the battle, men leading it, and military divisions which had taken a stance of open revolt on all occasions. And only yesterday, within the government benches an apology was made of these military divisions that were plotting insurrection and promoting it among the other troops.²⁷

In the wake of Nitti's parliamentary address, the charge of plotting a *coup d'état* was levelled against the Prime Minister by the right-wing opposition formed by nationalists and former interventionists. Besides, these two constituencies had never accepted Nitti as a head of government worthy of managing the victory, since he was a representative of parliamentary democracy, which had been held responsible for the worst ills of the country since 1914. The newspaper of the recently founded 'Movimento dei fasci di combattimento', headed by the former Socialist and interventionist Benito Mussolini, the *Popolo d'Italia*, lent these sentiments a voice, arguing that Nitti's dissolution of Parliament and call for new elections amounted to an attempted *coup d'état*.²⁸ The newspaper described the ongoing political conflict in the following terms:

What is taking place these days is not a nationalist 'revolution', as is claimed in the newspaper of the *pussisti* [the members of the Socialist Party], who are as physiologically unsuited to revolution as the toad is physiologically and anatomically endowed to flight ... what is troubling the country today is not a bourgeois revolution, or a proletarian one. It is the revolution of one section of the country against another. On both sides of the barricade, bourgeois and proletarians rub shoulders. What bring them together or apart is something that lies above class interests or the ideologies of old parties – it is the war.²⁹

A few days later, from the pages of the same newspaper Mussolini called for a *coup d'état*:

Many people are agonising over their impossibility to go to Fiume, but I ask myself: does no one know the way to Rome? Has the requisition of weapons – another sly move attempted by the ‘pig’ – stripped all citizens of their revolvers, hand grenades and daggers? There are still some left. In this remarkably dynamic age, one goes to prison today only to leave it in triumph tomorrow.³⁰

If we shift our attention to the words in which the charge of plotting a coup was framed by the political rhetoric of the period, we soon realise the full extent of the fractures dividing the country. Historians have long ascertained that the desire for a nation-wide action, not limited to Fiume, was widespread among the legionaries and was even shared by some of their commanders – D’Annunzio, of course, but also the Venetian irredentist nationalist Giovanni Giuriati at certain moments – although these sentiments do not imply the existence of an organisation capable of accomplishing such action.³¹ What is particularly revealing of the tension which existed and the popularity of certain ideas is the journey to Fiume made by Senator Borletti on behalf of Milanese industrialists, with the aim of testing the ground. Likewise, the nationalists Alfredo Rocco and Francesco Coppola travelled to Fiume to invite D’Annunzio to march on Trieste.³² Many years later, the nationalist jurist Rocco described how, in the momentous year 1919, it was already evident to the more far-sighted that waging a battle within the confines of the law was useless. The coming elections were bound to reinforce the chains that made the country a slave to demagogues, who could utterly undo the nation, if they only dared to do so.³³

While it was far from clear what political order would emerge in the wake of the revolt, it was evident that Fiume would act as the information hub and powerhouse of a subversive movement, destined to spread to Milan, Venice, Trento, Genoa, Rome and Naples.³⁴

Much the same conclusions could be drawn from the news that reached the Ministry of the Interior in those days from trustees and police commissioners, according to whom the Duke of Aosta was involved in the subversive plans.³⁵ This information is also confirmed by the letters exchanged between the Albertini brothers. Antonio informed Luigi of the rumour that D’Annunzio was caught between his moderate followers and ‘hotheads’ who:

apparently pressed for a march towards Italy ... In any case – it is unclear whether during the course of this action or before it – in various cities officer uprisings broke out to the cries of Fiume and D’Annunzio, uprisings planned in these days by Vecchi and Martinetti ... Nitti has opposed this propaganda with a counter-propaganda, which is apparently why the plan to make them rise up on the 23rd (tomorrow) was aborted ... But we cannot rule out the possibility that something might happen at the end of the month or in early November ... In short, he says that he is far from unperturbed, that he certainly believes that a coup de main is not

unavoidable, and that he actually hopes to forestall it with his propaganda, although he is not really confident of this.³⁶

The news did not end there. On the night between 24 and 25 October, a great commotion gripped Rome when a steamer carrying a hundred Arditi was seen leaving Fiume heading for the Italian coastline. The crisis was resolved when the steamer called at Grado and twenty men who had gone ashore to 'get a field battery' were detained by the local police.³⁷ The captain decided to sail the steamer back to Fiume and put an end to the adventure so as to avoid any further consequences. On this occasion, General Badoglio himself privately stated that if episodes of the sort were to occur more frequently he was not sure that he could keep the situation under control.³⁸

In the early years after the war, the picture in the rest of Europe was just as complex as in Italy, and in many countries it seemed as though the conflict had yet to come to an end.³⁹ This was particularly the case in the countries that had lost the conflict, such as Germany. In March 1920, Kapp's attempted *coup d'état* – which brought out the contrast between the democratic authorities and right-wing radicalism in Weimar Germany – was not only a topic of considerable interest for Italian newspapers but also a matter of reflection and a term of comparison.⁴⁰ In the aftermath of the legitimate government's victory over the plotters, the *Corriere della Sera* discussed the events by warning its readers not to 'ramble' about dictatorship or 'any militarist abuse', on the grounds that even in Prussia, which had a strong military apparatus by tradition, the attempt to stage a coup had met with failure.

However, it is all too easy to see that the lesson which the *Corriere* drew from the event was to prove a naive hope more than an accurate forecast of the future of Italy and Europe:

The age of reactionary restorations would appear to have ended for good. As soon as one is accomplished, Bolshevik fury follows on the heels of militarist fury ... The two frenzies are as correlative and complementary as the two stages of manic-depressive folly. In these sorrowful months Europe has come face to face with death far too often (the great putsch in Berlin being merely its latest appearance) for everyone, Germans and non-Germans alike, not to finally realise that the time has come to live a little more wisely.⁴¹

What is more accurate and thought-provoking, despite its one-sided interpretation, is the analysis of German events made by *Idea Nazionale*,⁴² which attempted to explain not just that crisis but also – and most importantly – nationalist politics in Italy:

Whatever turn domestic events may take in Germany, the international significance of the crisis is evident. The German counter-revolution confirms the utter failure of the spirit of the Paris Peace Conference the same

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day in which the Senate in Washington has issued a final condemnation of the very letter of the Treaty of Versailles.⁴³

Returning to the subject the following day, the nationalist newspaper stated:

democratic governments are capable of repression, but because of their inevitable constitutional weakness they are incapable of prevention. The Kapp-Luttwitz episode has shown the folly of all those partisan men who pursue their violent ideas in a way that is out of touch with reality, placing their reveries and egoism above the Fatherland: on the one hand, a group of second-rate people, disregarding the discipline established by greater men, has shaken the order of the Country, obeying a passionate impulse; on the other hand, with just as much passion but with far more disastrous intents and viler uses of violence, Communist factions have sought to take advantage of the breach which the weakness of the government and the violence of the few had opened in the body of the State, so as to unleash their wave of destruction.⁴⁴

The attention paid by the *Idea Nazionale* to the role played by Communist factions in the Kapp crisis was not unjustified: the crisis had many lessons to teach anyone who regarded the prospect of a *coup d'état* as a plausible hypothesis. The appeal which Nitti made to workers on the occasion of D'Annunzio's exploit, and which was fiercely criticised by the *Idea Nazionale*, was similar to the appeal made by the democratic German government on this occasion to save the country from the military *coup d'état*. This appeal proved successful, showing not only that a democratic government was capable of repressing any attempts at subversive action but also – as Anna Kuliscioff had noted the year before – that it could deploy what were generally regarded as anti-system forces in order to quash any plot hatched by the army. The episode revealed that the liberal-democratic ruling class in Germany had realised by then that in the face of extreme danger for the country workers could be mobilised to preserve the existing democratic order. Italian nationalists feared this lesson above all, because it threatened to remove their political side from the sphere of public legitimacy. After all, what had preserved their legitimacy up until then was precisely the fact that Communists and Socialists could be considered a threat to the political system.

From Fiume to Rome?

In October 1920, with the second anniversary of the victory approaching, new rumours started spreading that some generals were planning a coup. In addition to members of the army and nationalists, the news involved Fascists and Arditi. The government therefore shifted its attention once more from the far Left and the occupation of factories to the nationalist Right, which for the third time in under two years became a focus of concern for the powers in charge.⁴⁵

Fiume once again served as a hive of ideas. The first step in the coup was meant to be the landing in Ancona of ships stocked with weapons, according to a plan which had first been conceived by the legionaries in Fiume – in agreement with the leader of the Italian anarchist movement Errico Malatesta and his comrades – early in 1920, but which had never been implemented because of the Socialist Party's opposition.⁴⁶ The *Giornale d'Italia*, a very influential liberal conservative newspaper, and the liberal-democratic newspaper *Epoca* were the first to spread the news, which they dismissed as unfounded.⁴⁷ The *Corriere della Sera* took a very different view, attacking the subversion which had crept into the army. This newspaper not only branded the members of the armed forces as 'rebels' but went so far as to argue that, given the claims made by the press and the Fascists, the silence of the high military echelons with regard to the coup was a sign of their connivance.⁴⁸ However, the recent factory occupations led the Milanese newspaper to place a greater emphasis on the revolution-reaction conjunction. What worried the *Corriere* most was the prospect of a civil war:

in our view, it would be difficult to make a more serious tactical mistake than to step outside the boundaries of legality in order to impose the will of one class or party by means of violence. This would be the signal of a dreadful fight whose consequences and outcome are impossible to foresee, since all the popular forces and a considerable share of the democratic ones would rally against the military-conservative reaction. What would this lead to? Possibly to the very opposite of what was expected.⁴⁹

After 24 October, the date of the expected coup, and the anniversary of the Italian defeat at Caporetto, the *Avanti!* emphasised that the constant flow of refutations from the upper echelons of the army was in itself revealing of the fact that the accusation, far from being a laughing matter, was at any rate plausible enough to require disproof.⁵⁰ The rumours about this last plot find confirmation in Luigi Gasparotto's diary. The liberal-democratic interventionist, founder of the Associazione nazionale combattenti (Italian veterans' association) and future War Minister wrote that he had been asked by D'Annunzio whether he would be interested in taking part in a march on Rome, but had turned down this offer.⁵¹

The negotiations between the Fascists and D'Annunzio's men had been going on at least since the summer of 1920. Mussolini himself contributed to the planning of a march from Fiume to Rome but his interest then cooled in October, as he considered the terms of the Treaty of Rapallo unacceptable.⁵² Alfredo Rocco describes the atmosphere of those days as follows:

For the second time, no longer a few but a great many people realised that a decisive action was required to stop the Country on the path to catastrophe. The sealing of the Rapallo agreement was imminent and then the renunciations would become unretractable. All social and economic life

was paralysed and falling apart. Once again, dictatorship seemed like an urgent need. And all thoughts turned to the only highly organised centre of national resistance then in existence: Fiume. A plan of action was discussed in detail in October 1920 by the Central Committee of the Nationalist Association, which was urgently summoned. The *Idea Nazionale* intensified its campaign for a dictatorship ... The flow of pilgrims to Fiume increased; I myself returned there between late October and early November. Then too everything seemed to be settled, but things lingered on because Fiume was inextricably linked to the Adriatic problem. Finally, the signing of the Treaty of Rapallo on 11 November led to the irreparable, and over the Christmas of 1920 all hope to recover Fiume was drenched in blood.⁵³

According to the British embassy, unrest on the Right was fuelled in particular by the foreign affairs negotiations which the government was conducting and by the fear that with the Rapallo negotiations it would acquiesce in further concessions, particularly in such a delicate moment as the anniversary of the victory.⁵⁴ The embassy, which for the time being did not fear any further worsening of the situation, regarded the crisis as all the more serious because in the previous months the monarchy itself had not been exempt from considerable criticism: the rumour was circulating that the King would abdicate in favour of his son, a problematic prospect since the latter would be placed under the regency of the Duke of Aosta, who was apparently involved in many nationalist schemes.⁵⁵

The constant hatching of *coups d'état* within nationalist and army circles, and the frequency with which anti-democratic and anti-parliamentary speeches and perspectives were voiced, were meaningful elements in Italian politics at the time. They show the progressive coalescence and strengthening of groups that pursued the avowed aim of overthrowing the parliamentary system and banishing certain political forces (especially the Socialists) from the political arena, while at the same time isolating those sectors of the ruling class that strove for the progressive democratisation of the liberal State.⁵⁶ These tensions, which were rooted in unresolved problems marking the Italian political and economic context, were shared, in these same years, by many other European countries. They became part of a much broader, European-wide debate on the nature and effectiveness of liberal institutions and of political representation. The issue at stake was whether these institutions would survive the transformations brought about by the war both in the field of social organisation and in that of the economy and law.⁵⁷

It is interesting to note that, despite the political developments which occurred in Italy over the following months, the hatching of hazy *coups d'état* has frequently been mentioned by historians but seldom discussed as a political project, if not by Roberto Vivarelli's first books. If anything, what has proven more influential so far has been the aestheticising reading of the phenomenon, or indeed one that – as in Renzo De Felice's case – tends to dismiss these events as individual projects.⁵⁸ Far greater attention has been devoted to the strikes

and land occupations, as well to the discussion of a possible revolutionary, and thus Socialist or Bolshevik, evolution of Italian politics, which were given the name of 'red biennium' in the first years of the post-war period.

Recent research is starting to show not only the relevance of those grass-roots movements, in terms of their action (and violence), aims and ideology, and the fears and reactionary stances they engendered among the Italian ruling classes, but also the interplay between the institutional containment of these movements and their action.⁵⁹ Nonetheless, by directly investigating the plans for a *coup d'état* and by formulating a fully political interpretation of them, it is possible to grasp the authoritarian and subversive drive – already noted by American President Woodrow Wilson at the time – of part of Italian ruling classes, both in the military and in the civil sphere.⁶⁰ This approach further enables a shift in the interpretation of the crisis of post-war Italy, allowing us to understand it also, if not mainly, as a reaction to the democratisation of the country and the institutional role played by the Parliament.

Notes

- 1 Both quotes are drawn from F. Turati and A. Kuliscioff, *Carteggio V. 1919–1922. Dopoguerra e fascismo*, Turin, Einaudi, 1977, pp. 241–242 and 244–245.
- 2 See *ibid.*, pp. 202–248. See also P. Alatri, *Gabriele D'Annunzio*, Turin, UTET, 1983, p. 429. Henceforth, I will just use the name 'Fiume' since this is how the city was referred to by the Italians.
- 3 ACS, MI, PS, A5, 'Agitazione pro Fiume e Dalmazia', b. 2, fasc. 'Roma', the police commissioner of Rome to the Prefect, 11 June 1919; but see too F. Gerra, *L'impresa di Fiume*, Milan, Longanesi, 1974, p. 60; P. Alatri, Nitti, *D'Annunzio e la questione fiumana*, Milan, Feltrinelli, 1976, pp. 77–80.
- 4 ACS, MI, PS, A5, 'Agitazione pro Fiume e Dalmazia', b. 2, telegram from the cabinet of the Ministry of the Interior, 11 June 1919. D'Annunzio's refutation in a letter to Mussolini dated 11 June 1919 may be found in *Carteggio D'Annunzio-Mussolini (1919–1938)*, ed. by R. De Felice and E. Mariano, Milan, Mondadori, 1971, p. 7. On these matters, see Vivarelli, *Storia delle origini del fascismo. L'Italia dalla Grande guerra alla Marcia su Roma*, vol. I, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1991 p. 497 and notes.
- 5 See the articles 'Il "complotto militare" giudicato da Don Abbondio', *Idea Nazionale*, 16 June 1919; E. Corradini, 'Sedizione di governo', *Idea Nazionale*, 15 September 1919; E. Corradini, 'Falsificazioni', *Idea Nazionale*, 16 September 1919; 'Cinismo cieco', *Idea Nazionale*, 17 September 1919; E. Corradini, 'Sotto la prossima dittatura', *Idea Nazionale*, 19 September 1919; 'Il responsabile', *Idea Nazionale*, 25 September 1919; 'Il colpo di mano', *Idea Nazionale*, 1 October 1919.
- 6 'La grottesca manovra del "colpo di stato"', *Idea Nazionale*, 13 June 1919.
- 7 The quote is provided by Vivarelli, *Storia delle origini del fascismo*, p. 496 and it is drawn from 'I congiurati e i tremanti', *Il Dovere Nazionale*, 19 June 1919.
- 8 ACS, MI, PS, A5, 'Agitazione pro Fiume e Dalmazia', b. 2, fasc. 'Roma', telegram from the police commissioner of Rome to the Prefect, 11 June 1919. By contrast, his concern for Fiume notwithstanding, the Prefect of Milan did not notice anything unusual in his city: see ASMi, Gabinetto di prefettura, b. 118.
- 9 ACS, MI, PS, A5, 'Agitazione pro Fiume e Dalmazia', b. 2, telegram from the cabinet of the Minister of the Interior, 11 June 1919.
- 10 E. Caviglia, *Il conflitto di Fiume*, Milan, Garzanti, 1948, p. 69–71
- 11 See too Vivarelli, *Storia delle origini del fascismo*, p. 554.

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- 12 Atti parlamentari Camera dei Deputati [henceforth APC], XXIV legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. XVII, p. 19167, session of 11 July 1919.
- 13 PRO, FO 608/38, Ronald Rodd to Lord Curzon, 12 June 1919.
- 14 On Fiume see: Alatri, Nitti, *D'Annunzio e la questione adriatica*, Milan, Feltrinelli, 1959; Vivarelli, *Il dopoguerra in Italia e l'avvento del fascismo. 1918–1922*, Naples, Istituto italiano per gli studi storici – Feltrinelli, 1967; Ledeen, *The First Duce: D'Annunzio a Fiume*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977; R. De Felice, *D'Annunzio politico. 1918–1938*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 1978; Vivarelli, *Storia delle origini del fascismo*; Isnenghi, *L'Italia in piazza*.
- 15 See Vivarelli, *Storia delle origini del fascismo*, pp. 491–587.
- 16 For a complete account of the discussion, see APC, XXIV legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. XIX, pp. 21088–21100, session of 13 September 1919.
- 17 See APC, XXIV legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. XIX, op. cit., p. 21090. On the ambiguity of these movements, see Isnenghi, *L'Italia in piazza*. On the Pietralata events, see De Felice, *Mussolini il rivoluzionario*, n. 5, p. 552; Ledeen, *The First Duce*, p. 46; M. Grisogni, 'Gli Arditi del popolo a Roma. Due aspetti particolari della loro storia', *Storia contemporanea*, no. 5, 1986, esp. pp. 854–861, and E. Francescangeli, *Arditi del popolo. Argo Secondari e la prima organizzazione anti-fascista (1917–1922)*, Rome, Odradek, 2000, p. 47.
- 18 See APC, XXIV legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. XIX, op. cit., p. 21090. See too Tasca, *Nascita e avvento del fascismo*, p. 78.
- 19 See too G. Giolitti, *Memorie della mia vita*, Milan, Treves, 1922, p. 582.
- 20 APC, XXIV legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. XIX, op. cit., p. 21090.
- 21 APC, XXIV legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. XIX, op. cit., pp. 21088–21100.
- 22 On the political use of the memory of the Risorgimento on the part both of Fascists and anti-Fascists, see too C. Pavone, 'Antifascisti e fascisti di fronte alla tradizione del Risorgimento', *Passato e presente*, no. 7, 1959, pp. 850–918; S. Levis Sullam, *Giuseppe Mazzini and the Origins of Fascism*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2015.
- 23 Emphasis in the original. L. Albertini, *Epistolario 1911–1926*, vol. III, *Il dopoguerra*, Milan, Mondadori, 1968, p. 1284. As a possible parallel, consider the position openly adopted by the *Corriere della Sera*: 'Il limite', *Corriere della Sera*, 21 September 1919. On this analogy, see too P. Badoglio, *Rivelazioni su Fiume*, Rome, Donatello De Luigi, 1946, p. 19.
- 24 Albertini, *Epistolario 1911–1926*, p. 1284. See too Caviglia, *Il conflitto di Fiume*, p. 127.
- 25 In the closing lines of the letter he sent Albertini on 14 September 1919, Cadorna wrote: 'The hyper-democratic regimes are not designed to keep up discipline – on the contrary!' See Albertini, *Epistolario*, vol. III, p. 1968. At the time, Cadorna's conduct during the war was being made the object of a parliamentary inquiry, focusing on his role in the Caporetto defeat: see M. Isnenghi, G. Rochat, *La Grande Guerra 1914–1918*, Milan, La Nuova Italia, 2000, pp. 485–486.
- 26 Widespread concern with regard to the army is expressed in the memoirs and letters from this period: see P. and A. Gobetti, *Nella tua breve esistenza. Lettere 1918–1926*, Turin, Einaudi, 1991, p. 172.
- 27 APC, XXIV legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. XIX, p. 21092.
- 28 See esp. Mussolini, 'L'urto fatale', *Popolo d'Italia*, 24 September 1919; Mussolini, 'Parodia di morituri', *Popolo d'Italia*, 25 September 1919; M., 'I fantasmi idioti!', *Popolo d'Italia*, 26 September 1919; A. Lanzillo, 'Dopo il "colpo" nittiano', *Popolo d'Italia*, 1 October 1919; Mussolini, 'Il ministro della fogna', *Popolo d'Italia*, 2 October 1919. We know, however, that in 1919 Mussolini was among those men who prevented Fiume legionaries from marching on Rome, arguing that the conditions were not right for such a feat: see Tasca, *Nascita e avvento del fascismo*, p. 81; De Felice, *Mussolini il rivoluzionario*, pp. 578–580.

- 29 Mussolini, 'L'urto fatale', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 24 September 1919.
- 30 Mussolini, 'Il ministro della fogna', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 2 October 1919. The tone is much the same as that of the articles published in *Idea Nazionale* in those days, only without the call to active resistance against Nitti.
- 31 See Tasca, *Nascita e avvento del fascismo*, p. 81 and Vivarelli, *Storia delle origini del fascismo*, p. 497. See too De Felice and Mariano (eds), *Carteggio D'Annunzio-Mussolini (1919-1938)*.
- 32 Tasca, *Nascita e avvento del fascismo*, p. 81. See too A. Rocco, 'Gli antecedenti, lo spirito, le date della marcia su Roma', in A. Rocco, *Scritti e discorsi politici. II. La lotta contro la reazione antinazionale 1919-1924*, Milan, Giuffrè, 1938, pp. 739-746, esp. pp. 740-741 (the article was originally published in *Idea Nazionale*, 28 October 1923).
- 33 Rocco, *Gli antecedenti, lo spirito, le date della marcia su Roma*, p. 740.
- 34 Alatri, Nitti, *D'Annunzio e la questione adriatica*, esp. p. 317.
- 35 See ACS, MI, A 5, 'Agitazione pro Fiume e Dalmazia', b. 4, fasc. 32, Unsigned note, dated Rome, 24 October 1919; b. 2, fasc. 6, the Ministry of the Interior to the Prefect of Milan, 18 September 1919 and ACS, PCM, Guerra europea 1915-1918, b. 234bis, War Minister Cavaglia in command of the armed forces in Bari, Ancona and Rome, 22 November 1919. In the same days, similar news was circulating in the foreign consulates in Italy: see Ledeen, *The First Duce*.
- 36 Albertini, *Epistolario 1911-1926*, pp. 1304-1306. For further confirmation about plans for an expedition, see the telegrams in ACS, PCM, Guerra europea 1915-1918, b. 243 bis, the Prefect of Ancona Grenet to the Ministry of the Navy, 24 October 1919; and Sechi to the Ministry of the Interior, 25 October 1919. In September 1919, Mussolini opposed the spread of the Fiume insurrection: see De Felice and Mariano (eds), *Carteggio D'Annunzio-Mussolini*, pp. 12 and 16-17. The ambiguousness of Mussolini's attitude towards the Fiume uprising has often been emphasised in the secondary literature.
- 37 Albertini, *Epistolario 1911-1926*, pp. 1309. No mention of the event is made in the press.
- 38 See Albertini, *Epistolario 1911-1926*, pp. 1311.
- 39 On this violent post-war scenario, see the recent thesis by R. Gerwarth, *The Vanquished: Why the First World War Failed to End, 1917-1923*, London, Allen Lane, 2016.
- 40 H. Schulze, *La repubblica di Weimar. La Germania dal 1917 al 1933*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1987, pp. 245-267.
- 41 'Le cinque giornate di Berlino', *Corriere della Sera*, 18 March 1920. Over the previous days, the newspaper had devoted numerous articles to the event, including front page ones: see 'Sommosa militare sventata in Germania', *Corriere della Sera*, 13 March 1920; 'Un colpo di stato antirivoluzionario a Berlino', *Corriere della Sera*, 14 March 1920; 'Un nuovo colpo di scena in Germania. Ebert rimane al potere dopo un accordo con Kapp', *Corriere della Sera*, 16 March 1920; 'La caotica situazione in Germania', *Corriere della Sera*, 17 March 1920; 'Kapp e Luttwitz restituiscono il potere al vecchio governo', *Corriere della Sera*, 18 March 1920.
- 42 More generally on the nationalist considerations inspired by the German situation, see F. Gaeta, *Il nazionalismo italiano*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 1981, p. 190. The event was also extensively discussed by the Socialist press: see E. Collotti, 'I socialisti italiani e la rivoluzione di novembre in Germania', *Studi storici*, vol. X, no. 3, 1969, pp. 587-611.
- 43 'Morale', *Idea Nazionale*, 17 March 1920.
- 44 'La Germania e l'Europa', *Idea Nazionale*, 20 March 1920. See too the other article which the *Idea Nazionale* devoted to this crisis: 'La controrivoluzione militare si estende in Germania', *Idea Nazionale*, 16 March 1920.

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- 45 On this shift of focus, see Kennard to the Foreign Office, 27 October 1920, in PRO, FO 371/4889 (cc. 162–165).
- 46 See Tasca, *Nascita e avvento del fascismo*, n. 34, p. 90; De Felice, *Mussolini il rivoluzionario*, p. 554; Francescangeli, *Arditi del popolo*, p. 34 and G. Berti, *Errico Malatesta e il movimento anarchico italiano ed internazionale 1872–1932*, Milan, Franco Angeli, 2003, pp. 651–659. On the revolutionary fervour pervading Fiume, see C. Salaris, *Alla festa della rivoluzione. Artisti e libertari con D'Annunzio a Fiume*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2002.
- 47 'Le voci di complotti militaristi', *Corriere della Sera*, 26 October 1920.
- 48 'Fedeltà', *Corriere della Sera*, 24 October 1920.
- 49 The newspaper adopted this position on later occasions as well: see e.g. 'La campagna nazionalista e la necessità di disciplina', *Corriere della Sera*, 26 ottobre 1920.
- 50 'I complotti e la situazione', *Avanti!*, 28 October 1920.
- 51 The episode is quoted in a note by Tasca: see Tasca, *Nascita e avvento del fascismo*, n. 35, pp. 90–91.
- 52 Tasca, *Nascita e avvento del fascismo*, n. 13, pp. 199–200; De Felice, *Mussolini il rivoluzionario*, pp. 580–581, but also pp. 640–647.
- 53 Rocco, *Gli antecedenti, lo spirito, le date della marcia su Roma*, p. 742.
- 54 See the aforementioned letter by Kennard to the Foreign Office, 27 October 1920, in PRO, FO 371/4889 (cc. 162–165).
- 55 *Ibid.*
- 56 For a similar picture, see R. Vivarelli, *Storia delle origini del fascismo*, pp. 496–497. The fact that large sections of the army welcomed the prospect of radical uprisings and political conspiracies is also confirmed by P. Pieri and G. Rochat, *Pietro Badoglio*, Turin, UTET, 1974, pp. 473–475. On these plans for a coup, see too P. Alatri, *Gabriele D'Annunzio*, pp. 415–418, where the author stresses the threat posed to the State while concluding, with Rochat, that the plans hatched were probably unrealistic.
- 57 On these topics, see the hypotheses put forward by A. Gramsci, *Quaderno 22. Americanismo e fordismo*, Turin, Einaudi, 1975. The most compelling study is C. Maier, *Recasting Bourgeois Europe: Stabilization in France, Germany and Italy in the Decade after World War I*, Princeton University Press, 2015 [1975].
- 58 See Vivarelli, *Storia delle origini del fascismo*, pp. 496–497. De Felice adopted a very different perspective, refusing to regard any of the alleged plans as genuine political projects: see De Felice, *Mussolini il rivoluzionario*, p. 553.
- 59 F. Fabbri, *Le origini della guerra civile. L'Italia dalla Grande Guerra al Fascismo, 1918–1921*, Turin, UTET, 2009.
- 60 See D.F. Schmitz, *The United States and Fascist Italy, 1922–1940*, Chapel Hill and London, The University of North Carolina Press, 1988, pp. 34–35.

Notes

Preface

- 1 The historiographical tendency to underestimate the use of violence during the March on Rome may be traced back to Angelo Tasca, who was nonetheless one of the first of Fascism to draw attention to its violent politics: see A. Tasca, *Nascita e avvento del fascismo*, Bari, Laterza, 1972 [1938], esp. p. 476. On the Fascist historiography of the March on Rome and this ambivalent attitude towards the founding event of Fascism, see M. Isnenghi, 'La marcia su Roma', in M. Isnenghi (ed.), *I luoghi della memoria. Strutture ed eventi dell'Italia unita*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 1997, and G. Albanese, 'Reconsidering the March on Rome', *European History Quarterly*, vol. 42, no. 3, 2012, pp. 403–21.
- 2 See the evolving interpretations of the anti-Fascist intellectuals: G. Salvemini, *The Fascist Dictatorship in Italy*, London, Jonathan Cape, 1928, his diary of those days, published posthumously, *Memorie e soliloqui. Diario 1922–1923*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2001, in particular p. 36, as well as his lectures in Harvard, delivered around 1943, and available in Salvemini, *The Origins of Fascism in Italy*, London, Harper & Lee, 1973.
- 3 These articles were then published in 1923 in L. Salvatorelli, *Nazionalfascismo*, Turin, Einaudi, 1977 [1923].
- 4 E. Lussu, *The March on Rome and Thereabouts: An Autobiographical Account by a Leading Sardinian Republican Politician of Resistance to Fascism in Sardinia from 1918–1930*, Lewinston (NY), Edwin Mellen, 1992.
- 5 The main exceptions to this perspective are A. Lyttelton, *The Seizure of Power: Fascism in Italy 1919–1929*, London, Routledge, 2009 [1974]; G. Santomassimo, *La marcia su Roma*, Florence, Giunti, 2000; M. Saija, *I prefetti italiani nella crisi dello stato liberale*, Milan, Giuffrè, 2001; M. Isnenghi, *L'Italia in piazza. I luoghi della vita pubblica dal 1848 ai giorni nostri*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2004 [1994].
- 6 Lyttelton, *The Seizure of Power*, pp. 77–93. The definition of the March of Rome as a *coup d'état* was also taken up, albeit less frequently, in the post-war period: for the main juridical and historiographical interpretations of the phenomenon in such terms, see S. Tosi, *Il colpo di stato*, Rome, Gismondi, 1951, and G. Candeloro, *Storia dell'Italia moderna. VIII. La prima guerra mondiale, il dopoguerra, l'avvento del fascismo*, Milan, Feltrinelli, 1979, in particular p. 416.
- 7 Lyttelton, *The Seizure of Power*. See also, more recently, Gentile, *E fu subito regime*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 2012.
- 8 The quote is from L. Carlassare, 'La "rivoluzione" fascista e l'ordinamento statutario', *Diritto Pubblico*, no. 1, 1996, pp. 43–62. Much the same interpretative approach is favoured by G. Sabbatucci, 'Il "suicidio" della classe dirigente liberale. La legge Acerbo 1923–1924', *Italia contemporanea*, no. 174, 1989, pp. 57–80.

- 9 G. Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of World Wars*, Oxford University Press, 1990.
- 10 There is a huge literature on this subject. I will only refer to one of the most recent works, which demonstrates the liveliness of this interpretation almost thirty years after its formulation: R. Gerwarth, *The Vanquished: Why the First World War Failed to End, 1917–1923*, London, Allen Lane, 2016.
- 11 On the impact of Mosse's studies in Italy see L. Benadusi and G. Caravale (eds), *George Mosse's Italy: Interpretation, Reception and Intellectual Heritage*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. On Mosse's use of the brutalisation thesis in 1989, see *Storia del partito fascista. 1919–1922. Movimento e milizia*, Rome-Bari, Editori Laterza, 1989, p. 471, where Gentile refers to the 'brutalisation of life', drawing upon Mosse's *Toward the Final Solution: A History of European Fascism*, Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, 1978.
- 12 S. Reichardt, *Faschistische Kampfbinde. Gewalt und Gemeinschaft im italienischen Squadristum und in der deutschen SA*, Köln/Weimar/Wien, Böhlau, 2002. An Italian edition was published by Il Mulino in 2009.
- 13 A very important study for the Italian case is the book by A. Ventrone, *La seduzione totalitaria. Guerra, modernità, violenza politica (1914–1918)*, Rome, Donzelli, 2003.
- 14 F. Fabbri, *Le origini della guerra civile. L'Italia dalla Grande Guerra al Fascismo, 1918–1921*, Turin, UTET, 2009. The debate on the notion of civil war – also in the years 1919–1922 – was launched by some considerations of Claudio Pavone, put forward in *A Civil War: A History of the Italian Resistance*, London, Verso 2013 [1991]. On this theme see also M. Bresciani, 'L'autunno dell'Italia liberale; una discussione su guerra civile, origini del fascismo e storiografia «nazionale»', *Storica*, vol. 54, no. 3, 2013, pp. 77–110, and M. Di Figlia, 'La guerra civile del fascismo', *Meridiana*, no. 76, 2013, pp. 85–104.
- 15 M. Ebner, *Ordinary Violence in Mussolini's Italy*, Cambridge University Press, 2016; M. Millan, *Squadristo e squadristi nella dittatura fascista*, Rome, Viella, 2016 (and the discussion in *Contemporary European History*, vol. 22, n. 4, 2013).
- 16 Isnenghi, *La marcia su Roma*.
- 17 Gentile, *E fu subito regime*. See also Gentile, *Storia del partito fascista*, in particular pp. 676–680.
- 18 Rome-Bari, Laterza, 2016.

Chapter 1

- 1 Both quotes are drawn from F. Turati and A. Kuliscioff, *Carteggio V. 1919–1922. Dopoguerra e fascismo*, Turin, Einaudi, 1977, pp. 241–242 and 244–245.
- 2 See *ibid.*, pp. 202–248. See also P. Alatri, *Gabriele D'Annunzio*, Turin, UTET, 1983, p. 429. Henceforth, I will just use the name 'Fiume' since this is how the city was referred to by the Italians.
- 3 ACS, MI, PS, A5, 'Agitazione pro Fiume e Dalmazia', b. 2, fasc. 'Roma', the police commissioner of Rome to the Prefect, 11 June 1919; but see too F. Gerra, *L'impresa di Fiume*, Milan, Longanesi, 1974, p. 60; P. Alatri, Nitti, *D'Annunzio e la questione fiumana*, Milan, Feltrinelli, 1976, pp. 77–80.
- 4 ACS, MI, PS, A5, 'Agitazione pro Fiume e Dalmazia', b. 2, telegram from the cabinet of the Ministry of the Interior, 11 June 1919. D'Annunzio's refutation in a letter to Mussolini dated 11 June 1919 may be found in *Carteggio D'Annunzio-Mussolini (1919–1938)*, ed. by R. De Felice and E. Mariano, Milan, Mondadori, 1971, p. 7. On these matters, see Vivarelli, *Storia delle origini del fascismo. L'Italia dalla Grande guerra alla Marcia su Roma*, vol. I, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1991 p. 497 and notes.
- 5 See the articles 'Il "complotto militare" giudicato da Don Abbondio', *Idea Nazionale*, 16 June 1919; E. Corradini, 'Sedizione di governo', *Idea Nazionale*, 15

- September 1919; E. Corradini, 'Falsificazioni', *Idea Nazionale*, 16 September 1919; 'Cinismo cieco', *Idea Nazionale*, 17 September 1919; E. Corradini, 'Sotto la prosima dittatura', *Idea Nazionale*, 19 September 1919; 'Il responsabile', *Idea Nazionale*, 25 September 1919; 'Il colpo di mano', *Idea Nazionale*, 1 October 1919.
- 6 'La grottesca manovra del "colpo di stato"', *Idea Nazionale*, 13 June 1919.
 - 7 The quote is provided by Vivarelli, *Storia delle origini del fascismo*, p. 496 and it is drawn from 'I congiurati e i tremanti', *Il Dovere Nazionale*, 19 June 1919.
 - 8 ACS, MI, PS, A5, 'Agitazione pro Fiume e Dalmazia', b. 2, fasc. 'Roma', telegram from the police commissioner of Rome to the Prefect, 11 June 1919. By contrast, his concern for Fiume notwithstanding, the Prefect of Milan did not notice anything unusual in his city: see ASMi, Gabinetto di prefettura, b. 118.
 - 9 ACS, MI, PS, A5, 'Agitazione pro Fiume e Dalmazia', b. 2, telegram from the cabinet of the Minister of the Interior, 11 June 1919.
 - 10 E. Caviglia, *Il conflitto di Fiume*, Milan, Garzanti, 1948, p. 69–71
 - 11 See too Vivarelli, *Storia delle origini del fascismo*, p. 554.
 - 12 Atti parlamentari Camera dei Deputati [henceforth APC], XXIV legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. XVII, p. 19167, session of 11 July 1919.
 - 13 PRO, FO 608/38, Ronald Rodd to Lord Curzon, 12 June 1919.
 - 14 On Fiume see: Alatri, Nitti, *D'Annunzio e la questione adriatica*, Milan, Feltrinelli, 1959; Vivarelli, *Il dopoguerra in Italia e l'avvento del fascismo. 1918–1922*, Naples, Istituto italiano per gli studi storici – Feltrinelli, 1967; Ledeen, *The First Duce: D'Annunzio a Fiume*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977; R. De Felice, *D'Annunzio politico. 1918–1938*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 1978; Vivarelli, *Storia delle origini del fascismo*; Isnenghi, *L'Italia in piazza*.
 - 15 See Vivarelli, *Storia delle origini del fascismo*, pp. 491–587.
 - 16 For a complete account of the discussion, see APC, XXIV legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. XIX, pp. 21088–21100, session of 13 September 1919.
 - 17 See APC, XXIV legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. XIX, op. cit., p. 21090. On the ambiguity of these movements, see Isnenghi, *L'Italia in piazza*. On the Pietralata events, see De Felice, *Mussolini il rivoluzionario*, n. 5, p. 552; Ledeen, *The First Duce*, p. 46; M. Grispigni, 'Gli Arditi del popolo a Roma. Due aspetti particolari della loro storia', *Storia contemporanea*, no. 5, 1986, esp. pp. 854–861, and E. Francescangeli, *Arditi del popolo. Argo Secondari e la prima organizzazione antifascista (1917–1922)*, Rome, Odradek, 2000, p. 47.
 - 18 See APC, XXIV legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. XIX, op. cit., p. 21090. See too Tasca, *Nascita e avvento del fascismo*, p. 78.
 - 19 See too G. Giolitti, *Memorie della mia vita*, Milan, Treves, 1922, p. 582.
 - 20 APC, XXIV legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. XIX, op. cit., p. 21090.
 - 21 APC, XXIV legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. XIX, op. cit., pp. 21088–21100.
 - 22 On the political use of the memory of the Risorgimento on the part both of Fascists and anti-Fascists, see too C. Pavone, 'Antifascisti e fascisti di fronte alla tradizione del Risorgimento', *Passato e presente*, no. 7, 1959, pp. 850–918; S. Levis Sullam, *Giuseppe Mazzini and the Origins of Fascism*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2015.
 - 23 Emphasis in the original. L. Albertini, *Epistolario 1911–1926*, vol. III, *Il dopoguerra*, Milan, Mondadori, 1968, p. 1284. As a possible parallel, consider the position openly adopted by the *Corriere della Sera*: 'Il limite', *Corriere della Sera*, 21 September 1919. On this analogy, see too P. Badoglio, *Rivelazioni su Fiume*, Rome, Donatello De Luigi, 1946, p. 19.
 - 24 Albertini, *Epistolario 1911–1926*, p. 1284. See too Caviglia, *Il conflitto di Fiume*, p. 127.
 - 25 In the closing lines of the letter he sent Albertini on 14 September 1919, Cadorna wrote: 'The hyper-democratic regimes are not designed to keep up discipline – on the contrary!' See Albertini, *Epistolario*, vol. III, p. 1968. At the time, Cadorna's

- conduct during the war was being made the object of a parliamentary inquiry, focusing on his role in the Caporetto defeat: see M. Isnenghi, G. Rochat, *La Grande Guerra 1914–1918*, Milan, La Nuova Italia, 2000, pp. 485–486.
- 26 Widespread concern with regard to the army is expressed in the memoirs and letters from this period: see P. and A. Gobetti, *Nella tua breve esistenza. Lettere 1918–1926*, Turin, Einaudi, 1991, p. 172.
 - 27 APC, XXIV legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. XIX, p. 21092.
 - 28 See esp. Mussolini, 'L'urto fatale', *Popolo d'Italia*, 24 September 1919; Mussolini, 'Parodia di morituri', *Popolo d'Italia*, 25 September 1919; M., 'I fantasmi idioti!', *Popolo d'Italia*, 26 September 1919; A. Lanzillo, 'Dopo il 'colpo' nittiano', *Popolo d'Italia*, 1 October 1919; Mussolini, 'Il ministro della fogna', *Popolo d'Italia*, 2 October 1919. We know, however, that in 1919 Mussolini was among those men who prevented Fiume legionaries from marching on Rome, arguing that the conditions were not right for such a feat: see Tasca, *Nascita e avvento del fascismo*, p. 81; De Felice, *Mussolini il rivoluzionario*, pp. 578–580.
 - 29 Mussolini, 'L'urto fatale', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 24 September 1919.
 - 30 Mussolini, 'Il ministro della fogna', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 2 October 1919. The tone is much the same as that of the articles published in *Idea Nazionale* in those days, only without the call to active resistance against Nitti.
 - 31 See Tasca, *Nascita e avvento del fascismo*, p. 81 and Vivarelli, *Storia delle origini del fascismo*, p. 497. See too De Felice and Mariano (eds), *Carteggio D'Annunzio-Mussolini (1919–1938)*.
 - 32 Tasca, *Nascita e avvento del fascismo*, p. 81. See too A. Rocco, 'Gli antecedenti, lo spirito, le date della marcia su Roma', in A. Rocco, *Scritti e discorsi politici. II. La lotta contro la reazione antinazionale 1919–1924*, Milan, Giuffrè, 1938, pp. 739–746, esp. pp. 740–741 (the article was originally published in *Idea Nazionale*, 28 October 1923).
 - 33 Rocco, *Gli antecedenti, lo spirito, le date della marcia su Roma*, p. 740.
 - 34 Alatri, *Nitti, D'Annunzio e la questione adriatica*, esp. p. 317.
 - 35 See ACS, MI, A 5, 'Agitazione pro Fiume e Dalmazia', b. 4, fasc. 32, Unsigned note, dated Rome, 24 October 1919; b. 2, fasc. 6, the Ministry of the Interior to the Prefect of Milan, 18 September 1919 and ACS, PCM, Guerra europea 1915–1918, b. 234bis, War Minister Cavaglia in command of the armed forces in Bari, Ancona and Rome, 22 November 1919. In the same days, similar news was circulating in the foreign consulates in Italy: see Ledeen, *The First Duce*.
 - 36 Albertini, *Epistolario 1911–1926*, pp. 1304–1306. For further confirmation about plans for an expedition, see the telegrams in ACS, PCM, Guerra europea 1915–1918, b. 243 bis, the Prefect of Ancona Grenet to the Ministry of the Navy, 24 October 1919; and Sechi to the Ministry of the Interior, 25 October 1919. In September 1919, Mussolini opposed the spread of the Fiume insurrection: see De Felice and Mariano (eds), *Carteggio D'Annunzio-Mussolini*, pp. 12 and 16–17. The ambiguousness of Mussolini's attitude towards the Fiume uprising has often been emphasised in the secondary literature.
 - 37 Albertini, *Epistolario 1911–1926*, pp. 1309. No mention of the event is made in the press.
 - 38 See Albertini, *Epistolario 1911–1926*, pp. 1311.
 - 39 On this violent post-war scenario, see the recent thesis by R. Gerwarth, *The Vanquished: Why the First World War Failed to End, 1917–1923*, London, Allen Lane, 2016.
 - 40 H. Schulze, *La repubblica di Weimar. La Germania dal 1917 al 1933*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1987, pp. 245–267.
 - 41 'Le cinque giornate di Berlino', *Corriere della Sera*, 18 March 1920. Over the previous days, the newspaper had devoted numerous articles to the event, including front page ones: see 'Sommosa militare sventata in Germania', *Corriere della*

- Sera*, 13 March 1920; 'Un colpo di stato antirivoluzionario a Berlino', *Corriere della Sera*, 14 March 1920; 'Un nuovo colpo di scena in Germania. Ebert rimane al potere dopo un accordo con Kapp', *Corriere della Sera*, 16 March 1920; 'La caotica situazione in Germania', *Corriere della Sera*, 17 March 1920; 'Kapp e Luttwitz restituiscono il potere al vecchio governo', *Corriere della Sera*, 18 March 1920.
- 42 More generally on the nationalist considerations inspired by the German situation, see F. Gaeta, *Il nazionalismo italiano*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 1981, p. 190. The event was also extensively discussed by the Socialist press: see E. Collotti, 'I socialisti italiani e la rivoluzione di novembre in Germania', *Studi storici*, vol. X, no. 3, 1969, pp. 587–611.
 - 43 'Morale', *Idea Nazionale*, 17 March 1920.
 - 44 'La Germania e l'Europa', *Idea Nazionale*, 20 March 1920. See too the other article which the *Idea Nazionale* devoted to this crisis: 'La controrivoluzione militare si estende in Germania', *Idea Nazionale*, 16 March 1920.
 - 45 On this shift of focus, see Kennard to the Foreign Office, 27 October 1920, in PRO, FO 371/4889 (cc. 162–165).
 - 46 See Tasca, *Nascita e avvento del fascismo*, n. 34, p. 90; De Felice, *Mussolini il rivoluzionario*, p. 554; Francescangeli, *Arditi del popolo*, p. 34 and G. Berti, *Errico Malatesta e il movimento anarchico italiano ed internazionale 1872–1932*, Milan, Franco Angeli, 2003, pp. 651–659. On the revolutionary fervour pervading Fiume, see C. Salaris, *Alla festa della rivoluzione. Artisti e libertari con D'Annunzio a Fiume*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2002.
 - 47 'Le voci di complotti militaristi', *Corriere della Sera*, 26 October 1920.
 - 48 'Fedeltà', *Corriere della Sera*, 24 October 1920.
 - 49 The newspaper adopted this position on later occasions as well: see e.g. 'La campagna nazionalista e la necessità di disciplina', *Corriere della Sera*, 26 ottobre 1920.
 - 50 'I complotti e la situazione', *Avanti!*, 28 October 1920.
 - 51 The episode is quoted in a note by Tasca: see Tasca, *Nascita e avvento del fascismo*, n. 35, pp. 90–91.
 - 52 Tasca, *Nascita e avvento del fascismo*, n. 13, pp. 199–200; De Felice, *Mussolini il rivoluzionario*, pp. 580–581, but also pp. 640–647.
 - 53 Rocco, *Gli antecedenti, lo spirito, le date della marcia su Roma*, p. 742.
 - 54 See the aforementioned letter by Kennard to the Foreign Office, 27 October 1920, in PRO, FO 371/4889 (cc. 162–165).
 - 55 *Ibid.*
 - 56 For a similar picture, see R. Vivarelli, *Storia delle origini del fascismo*, pp. 496–497. The fact that large sections of the army welcomed the prospect of radical uprisings and political conspiracies is also confirmed by P. Pieri and G. Rochat, *Pietro Badoglio*, Turin, UTET, 1974, pp. 473–475. On these plans for a coup, see too P. Alatri, *Gabriele D'Annunzio*, pp. 415–418, where the author stresses the threat posed to the State while concluding, with Rochat, that the plans hatched were probably unrealistic.
 - 57 On these topics, see the hypotheses put forward by A. Gramsci, *Quaderno 22. Americanismo e fordismo*, Turin, Einaudi, 1975. The most compelling study is C. Maier, *Recasting Bourgeois Europe: Stabilization in France, Germany and Italy in the Decade after World War I*, Princeton University Press, 2015 [1975].
 - 58 See Vivarelli, *Storia delle origini del fascismo*, pp. 496–497. De Felice adopted a very different perspective, refusing to regard any of the alleged plans as genuine political projects: see De Felice, *Mussolini il rivoluzionario*, p. 553.
 - 59 F. Fabbri, *Le origini della guerra civile. L'Italia dalla Grande Guerra al Fascismo, 1918–1921*, Turin, UTET, 2009.

- 60 See D.F. Schmitz, *The United States and Fascist Italy, 1922–1940*, Chapel Hill and London, The University of North Carolina Press, 1988, pp. 34–35.

Chapter 2

- 1 On this aspect: M. Franzinelli, *Squadristi*, Milan, Mondadori, 2003, pp. 11–44.
- 2 On the Socialist Party and violence: G. Minasi, 'L'attività illegale del PSI nel biennio 1919–1920', *Storia contemporanea*, no. 4, 1978, pp. 685 ff. See too, more recently, F. Fabbri, *Le origini della guerra civile*.
- 3 See in particular: M. Isnenghi, *L'Italia in piazza*, pp. 207–300 and, for the interventionist period, A. Ventrone, *La seduzione totalitaria*.
- 4 Gentile, *Storia del partito fascista*, pp. 57–59.
- 5 On the situation in Trieste see Lyttelton, *The Seizure of Power*, pp. 53–54. On the bomb in St. Mark's Square in Venice see G. Albanese, *Alle origini del fascismo. La violenza politica a Venezia 1919–1922*, Padua, Il Poligrafo, 2001, pp. 15–16 (on Venice in English, see R. Bosworth, *Italian Venice: A History*, Yale University Press, 2015).
- 6 This was widely acknowledged even in the interwar period: see Tasca, *Nascita e avvento del fascismo*.
- 7 Gentile, *Storia del partito fascista*, p. 476, and pp. 495–504.
- 8 On the evolution of the stance adopted by the Ministry of the Interior as regards Fascist violence and on the attitude of the Prefects, see: M. Saija, *I prefetti italiani nella crisi dello Stato liberale*, Milan, Giuffrè, 2001.
- 9 On the development of the Fascist movement in the spring–summer of 1920 see Gentile, *Storia del partito fascista*, pp. 119–162.
- 10 B. Mussolini, *Scritti e discorsi. La rivoluzione fascista (23 marzo 1919–28 ottobre 1922)*, Milan, Hoepli, 1934, pp. 117–119.
- 11 A. Lyttelton, 'Fascism and Violence in Post-War Italy: Political Strategy and Social Conflict', in W. Mommsen and G. Hirschfeld (eds), *Social Protest, Violence and Terror in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Europe*, London, Palgrave, 1982, pp. 257–274.
- 12 I. Granata, 'Storia nazionale e storia locale: alcune considerazioni sulla problematica del fascismo delle origini (1919–1922)', *Storia contemporanea*, vol. XI, no. 3, 1980, pp. 503–544.
- 13 On punitive expeditions see Tasca, *Nascita e avvento del fascismo*, pp. 165–167.
- 14 Tasca, *Nascita e avvento del fascismo*, pp. 209–217. This was also clear to the General Director of Public Security: ACS, MI, PS, 1921, b. 90, report by the General Director of Public Security, no date.
- 15 In the same period, events of this sort affected 'only' 13.7% of southern Italy (see Franzinelli, *Squadristi*, pp. 96–97). Among the first scholars to notice the relevance of this was F.L. Ferrari, *Le régime fasciste italien*, Paris, Éditions Spes, 1928, p. 293.
- 16 Saija, *I prefetti italiani*, pp. 156–157.
- 17 ACS, MI, PS, 1921, b. 90, report by the General Director of Public Security.
- 18 APC, XXV legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. VI, session of 17 November 1920, p. 5.611.
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 See 'I partiti e lo stato', *Il Messaggero*, 2 February 1921, quoted in G. Talamo, *Il «Messaggero». Un giornale durante il fascismo. Cento anni di storia*, vol. II (1919–1943), Florence, Le Monnier, 1984, p. 94. A more cautious approach was favoured by the newspaper *La Tribuna* which, from January 1921, started to mention Fascist acts of violence, while justifying them: see M. Legnani, '«La Tribuna» (1919–1925)', in *1919–1925 Dopoguerra e fascismo. Politica e stampa in Italia*, ed. by B. Vigezzi, Bari, Laterza, 1965, in particular pp. 100–101.

- 21 ACS, MI, PS, 1921, b. 90.
- 22 Report of the General Director of Public Security, s.d. [but 1921] in ACS, MI, PS, 1921, b. 90, p. 4.
- 23 Ibid. On Giolitti's standing on this and on the State Administration in general, see Saija, *I prefetti italiani*, pp. 247–312.
- 24 On the assault against Francesco Misiano, see A. Baravelli, *La Vittoria smarrita: legittimità e rappresentazioni della Grande Guerra nella crisi del sistema liberale (1919–1924)*, Rome, Carocci, 2006, pp. 204–205.
- 25 APC, XXVI legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. I, session of 13 June 1921, pp. 2–9.
- 26 Ibid., p. 5.
- 27 On 21 December 1921, though, the Chamber of the Deputies decided to annul Misiano's election: see S. Cannarsa, *Senato e Camera nei loro rapporti e conflitti (1848–1949)*, Rome, Scarano editore, no date (but 1954), pp. 257–258.
- 28 These are *Fascismo. Inchiesta socialista sulle gesta dei fascisti in Italia*, Milan, Casa Editrice Avanti, 1922 [1st ed. 1921], and *Barbarie rossa: resoconto cronologico delle principali gesta commesse dai socialisti italiani dal 1919 in poi*, Rome, Fasci Italiani di Combattimento, 1921.
- 29 The confrontations happened on 21 June, and 20 and 22 July 1921. See APC, XXVI legislature, *Discussions*, vol. I, session of 21 June 1921.
- 30 On the Pact of Pacification in English see Lyttelton, *The Seizure of Power*, pp. 72–76. For a more recent and complete interpretation see Gentile, *Storia del partito fascista*, pp. 214–313.
- 31 Particularly relevant here are Giacomo Matteotti's addresses to the Chamber: see APC, XXVI legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. II, pp. 2000–2001.
- 32 ACS, MI, Gabinetto Bonomi, 'Ordine pubblico', b. 1, telegram from the Prefect Olivieri to the Ministry of the Interior, 12 July 1921.
- 33 ACS, MI, Gabinetto Bonomi, 'Ordine pubblico', b. 1, telegram from the Prefect Mori to the Ministry of the Interior, 12 July 1921.
- 34 See the 2nd Division of Infantry (Alessandria) Commander's report to Turin's Head Quarter, titled 'Accidents against the Hon. Treves, Acqui', 17 July 1921 in ACS, MI, Gabinetto Bonomi, 'Ordine pubblico', b. 1.
- 35 Cf. F. Mazza, 'Giuseppe Di Vagno', in DBDI, *ad nomen* and Franzinelli, *Squadristi*, pp. 52–53.
- 36 Some measures were adopted at the end of 1920, especially in those areas which had most been affected by Fascist violence, such as Emilia (Bologna, Ferrara and Modena): cf. Report of the General Director of Public Security, no date (but 1921) in ACS, MI, PS, 1921, b. 90, p. 5. On Bonomi's decisions after the Pacification Pact see Saija, *I prefetti italiani*, pp. 320–348.
- 37 Ministry of the Interior's circular letter to the Prefects 21 December 1921, in ACS, Gabinetto Bonomi, 'Ordine pubblico', b. 1.
- 38 ACS, MI, Gabinetto Bonomi, 'Ordine pubblico', b. 1, *Statistics on the disarmament of the citizens from 21 December 1921 to the 9 January 1922*.
- 39 ACS, MI, Gabinetto Bonomi, 'Ordine pubblico', b. 4, the Prefect of Milan to the Ministry of the Interior, 6 December 1921; letter of Ivanoe Bonomi to Bombacci, 17 January 1922; telegram from Lusignoli to the Ministry of the Interior, 17 January 1922.
- 40 B. Tobia, *L'Altare della Patria*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1998, pp. 71–86 and C. Brice, *Monumentalité publique et politique à Rome: le Vittoriano*, École Française de Rome, 1998, p. 345.
- 41 M. Ridolfi, *Le feste nazionali*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2003, p. 66.
- 42 See Gentile, *Storia del partito fascista*, pp. 361–386. On the relationship between the Veterans' Congress and the Fascist one see G. Sabbatucci, *I combattenti del primo dopoguerra*, Bari, Laterza, 1974, pp. 357–360. References to this are also to be found in newspapers from the period: 'Il tumultuoso inizio a Roma del

- congresso e i combattenti', *Corriere della Sera*, 6 November 1921; 'L'associazione combattenti sarà apolitica', *Corriere della Sera*, 8 November 1921.
- 43 The *Corriere della Sera* observed that the day after the demonstration, 11 November, there were still 10,000 Fascists in Rome: 'La fine dello sciopero a Roma annunciato per oggi. Il servizio ferroviario ripreso. Un'altra giornata di incidenti', *Corriere della Sera*, 12 November 1921; G. Polverelli, 'Congresso senza precedenti', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 8 November 1921.
 - 44 'Lo sciopero generale proclamato a Roma dopo conflitti tra ferrovieri e fascisti', *Corriere della Sera*, 10 November 1921; 'La proclamazione dello sciopero generale a Roma. I fascisti uccidono un ferroviere', *L'Avanti!*, 10 November 1921.
 - 45 'Il programma e l'azione sindacale dei fasci. Viva ripercussione dei fatti di Roma al congresso', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 10 November 1921.
 - 46 See the address by Prime Minister Bonomi to the Chamber of Deputies: APC, XXV legislature, *Discussioni*, vol. I, p. 2. The *Popolo d'Italia* tried to play down the clashes and to focus on the Congress and on Fascist demonstration in the capital: 'Il Congresso Fascista si chiude con un corteo formidabile. Quattroccentomila fascisti con quattromila gagliardetti sfilano per le strade di Roma', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 11 November 1921.
 - 47 'Giornata di sciopero e torbidi a Roma. Conflitti con due morti e centocinquanta feriti. Il corteo fascista a Roma', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 11 November 1921.
 - 48 See *Il Corriere della Sera* and *Il Popolo d'Italia* issues of 12 and 13 November 1921. The nationalist paper *Idea Nazionale* supported Fascist propaganda, saying that the Socialist strike was purposeful, but they did not completely rule out Fascist responsibility for the clashes: see 'Le responsabilità del governo', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 14 November 1921.
 - 49 See 'I doveri dello stato e i doveri verso lo stato', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 13 November 1921.
 - 50 APC, XXV legislature, *Discussioni*, vol. I, p. 4.
 - 51 See again, for this and the following quotation, APC, XXVI legislature, *Discussioni*, vol. I, p. 3.
 - 52 See Saija, *I prefetti italiani*, pp. 394–398.
 - 53 On the development of the PNF in 1922, see Gentile, *Storia del partito fascista*, pp. 544–558.
 - 54 D. Grandi, 'Il mito e la realtà (Alla vigilia del Consiglio nazionale Fascista)', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 2 April 1922. The importance of this article was underlined by Gentile in his *Storia del partito fascista*, pp. 586–592.
 - 55 Franzinelli, *Squadristi*, p. 156.
 - 56 Gentile, *Storia del partito fascista*, pp. 592–602.
 - 57 Togliatti, 'Aspetti del fascismo: la presa di Rimini', in Togliatti, *Opere*, ed. by E. Ragionieri, vol. I (1917–1926), Editori Riuniti, Roma 1967, pp. 373–376 (the article was published in *Ordine Nuovo* in July 1920).
 - 58 See, also for the following quotation: APC, XXVI legislature, *Discussioni*, vol. VIII, p. 8.193.
 - 59 APC, XXVI legislature, *Discussioni*, vol. VIII, p. 8.196.
 - 60 Ibid., p. 8.225. Also in the following speech Facta justified his government, denouncing the Fascist aggression against the State, see *ibid.*, pp. 8.248–8.249.
 - 61 Ibid., p. 8.266.
 - 62 Ibid., pp. 8.225–8.226.
 - 63 Ibid., pp. 8.252–8.255. These last two quotations are taken from: Benito Mussolini, *My Autobiography*, Mineola NY, Dover Publications, 2006, p. 121.
 - 64 APC, XXVI legislature, *Discussioni*, vol. VIII, p. 8.260–8.261.
 - 65 See the letter of Giovanni Gioitti to his collaborator Corradini: G. De Rosa, *Gioiitti e il fascismo in alcune sue lettere inedite*, Rome, Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1957, p. 17.

- 66 Tasca, *Nascita e avvento del fascismo*, pp. 333–335.
- 67 La direzione del Partito, 'Mobilitazione generale fascista contro lo sciopero anti-nazionale', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 1 August 1922. See what Emilio Gentile wrote on the Fascist menace: Gentile, *Storia del partito fascista*, p. 607.
- 68 'Il deciso e chiaro atteggiamento del gruppo parlamentare fascista di fronte alla crisi', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 2 August 1922.
- 69 On the heterogeneous participation to the strike see ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 56 and b. 57.
- 70 De Felice too did not exclude this hypothesis, but only for the most radical fringes of Fascism, see De Felice, *Mussolini il fascista. La conquista del potere*, Turin, Einaudi, 1995 [1966], pp. 275–276.
- 71 See ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 57, fasc. Roma, the Prefect of Naples to the Ministry of the Interior, 1 August 1922. *Ordine Nuovo* underlined that the reunion of squads in Ancona could be considered an attempt to reach the capital. See 'La conquista fascista di Ancona per marciare su Roma?', *L'Ordine Nuovo*, 6 August 1922. On the planning of the March on Rome in those days see the Modigliani's testimony to Angelo Tasca: in A. Tasca, *Témoignages*, p. 166 (but 167 of Tasca's manuscript in Fondazione G. Feltrinelli, Archivio Angelo Tasca, f. quaderni, sf. Marche sur Rome, quaderno VI) (see http://xdams.fondazionefeltrinelli.it/dm_0/FF/feltrinelliPubblicazioni/allegati/testoritrovato/0014.pdf, last checked on 21 December 2018)
- 72 See E. Pugliese, *Io difendo l'esercito*, Naples, Rispoli editore, 1946, pp. 11–12.
- 73 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 57, fasc. Milano, Lusignoli to the Ministry of the Interior, 4 August 1922. On these elements see De Felice, *Mussolini il fascista. La conquista del potere*, pp. 279–280.
- 74 ACS, MI, TUC, Outgoing messages, 1–8 August 1922, telegram from the head of the Cabinet to the Prefects and general commissioners in Trento, Trieste and Zara, 5 August 1922, h. 20.30. See also the minutes of the Cabinet that wrote the telegram in ACS, Verbal del consiglio dei ministri, 2 August 1921–13 October 1923.
- 75 See the telegram from Taddei to the Prefects of Milan, Genoa, Ancona, Leghorn, Parma in ACS, MI, TUC, Outgoing messages, 1–8 August 1922 and Taddei to General Barco in Brescia, 7 August 1922, h. 10.30.
- 76 Taddei to Generals Cattaneo, Squillace, Tiscorni, Ibba Piras and Lodomez, 6 August 1922, h. 10.30, in ACS, MI, TUC, Outgoing messages, 1–8 August 1922. At the same moment Taddei issued to the same generals and to all Prefects the order to search apartments for weapons and bombs: see Taddei to the generals and Prefects, 6 August 1922, h. 10.30, in ACS, MI, TUC, Outgoing messages, 1–8 August 1922.
- 77 Taddei to the Prefects, 4 August 1922, h. 18.15, in ACS, MI, TUC, Outgoing messages, 1–8 August 1922.
- 78 On the effects of the strike against the PPI, see G. De Rosa, *Storia del Partito popolare*, Bari, Laterza, 1958.
- 79 The *Osservatore romano* spoke of a conflict that had «providentially come to naught», see 'Le ultime vicende. Si passa al lavoro. Dal fatto il monito', *L'Osservatore romano*, 4 August 1922.
- 80 'Lettere di Giovanni Amendola a Carlo Cassola', *Nord e Sud*, new series, no. 24, 1961, in particular p. 56.
- 81 'Dalla marcia su Roma alle elezioni', *Battaglie sindacali*, 18 August 1922.
- 82 L. Salvatorelli, 'Dopo lo sciopero "legalitario"', *La Stampa*, 6 August 1922, now in Salvatorelli, *Nazionalfascismo*, pp. 77–80.
- 83 P.S., 'Filippo II', *Il Mattino*, 5–6 August 1922.
- 84 P.S., 'Responsabilità', *Il Mattino*, 6–7 August 1922.
- 85 See Repaci, *La marcia su Roma*, pp. 31–61; Gentile, *Storia del partito fascista*, pp. 606–615. On Ancona see M. Michelozzi, *Le origini del fascismo nell'anconetano*,

- Aralia editore, Urbino 1974; on Livorno see T. Abse, “‘Sovversivi’ e fascisti a Livorno (1918–1922). La lotta politica e sociale in una città della Toscana’, Quaderni della *Labronica*, supplement to *Comune Notizie*, no. 3, 7 November 1990; on Milan and Genoa see Tasca, *Nascita e avvento del fascismo*, pp. 351–352 and pp. 348–350. The authors of local research on these areas underline the fact that the ‘legalitarian’ strike of August was a more important turning point than the March on Rome for the transformation of the local balance of power. The Fascist attacks are described in ‘Il primo rendiconto del contrattacco fascista’, *Il Popolo d’Italia*, 5 August 1922 (see also Tasca, *Nascita e avvento del fascismo*, pp. 343–346). See also ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 55 and b. 57.
- 86 On the Fascist action in Milan see ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 57, fasc. Milano, telegram from the Prefect of Milan to the Ministry of the Interior, 2 August 1922, h. 22.35 and Il direttorio, ‘I fascisti al popolo di Milano’, *Il Popolo d’Italia*, 2 August 1922.
- 87 See ‘La sede del Comune di Milano occupata dai fascisti. Una giornata di conflitti, attentati e rappresaglie’, *Il Corriere della Sera*, 4 August 1922; ‘I baroni rossi cacciati dal palazzo del Comune’, *Il Popolo d’Italia*, 4 August 1922. See also Repaci, *La marcia su Roma*, pp. 35–44 and De Felice, *Mussolini il fascista. La conquista del potere*, pp. 276–281.
- 88 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 47, telegram from the Prefect Lusignoli to the Ministry of the Interior, 5 August 1922. On this telegram see also Gentile, *Storia del partito fascista*, pp. 612–615.
- 89 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 47, the Major to the Prefect, 5 August 1922.
- 90 The document from the Soleri Archive is quoted by Repaci, *La marcia su Roma*, p. 655 and also by De Felice, *Mussolini il fascista. La conquista del potere*, pp. 274–275. See also ACS, MI, 1922, b. 57, fasc. Milano. A few words on the strike – and none on this episode – are to be found in M. Soleri, *Memorie*, Turin, Einaudi, 1949, pp. 139–140.
- 91 See ‘Nessun operaio ha scioperato’, *Il Mattino*, 4–5 August 1922 and ‘I circoli comunista, socialista e popolare di Sorrento distrutti dai fascisti napoletani’, *Il Mattino*, 6–7 August 1922. A completely different version was provided by the Prefect of Naples, who mentioned no fights in his report of 6 August 1922 to the Ministry of the Interior (ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 57, fasc. Napoli). These were not the only cases in which the fighting was limited and the strike elicited little involvement, and yet the Fascists launched violent attacks: see Albanese, *Alle origini del fascismo*, pp. 225–227 and Alberghi, *Il fascismo in Emilia Romagna*, pp. 546–555.
- 92 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 56, fasc. Genova, telegram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 4 August 1922, h. 17.
- 93 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 56, fasc. Genova, telegram from the Commander of the 14th Infantry Division to the Ministry of the Interior, brief report, 9 August 1922.
- 94 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 56, fasc. Genova, telegram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 5 August 1922, h. 0.55. After these events all power was given to the military authorities: see the telegram from the Prefects to the Ministry of the Interior, 6 August 1922, h. 2.45 in *ibid*.
- 95 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 56, fasc. Genova, General Squillace to the Ministry of the Interior, 6 August 1922.
- 96 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 56, fasc. Genova, telegram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 17 August 1922, h. 14.25 and General Squillace to the Ministry of the Interior, 9 August 1922, h. 11.40.
- 97 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 56, fasc. Genova, the Commander of the 14th Infantry Division to the Ministry of the Interior, 12 August 1922 and 17 August 1922, h. 14.25.
- 98 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 56, fasc. Genova, telegram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 2 August 1922, h. 9.15.
- 99 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 57, fasc. Livorno, telegram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 2 August 1922, h. 11 pm.

- 100 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 57, fasc. Livorno, telegram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 5 August 1922, h. 21.30 and 7 August 1922.
- 101 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 57, fasc. Livorno, telegram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 8 August 1922.
- 102 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 56, fasc. Ancona, telegram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 4 August 1922, h. 1.30.
- 103 Tasca, *Nascita e avvento del fascismo*, pp. 352–355. See also E. Francescangeli, *Arditi del popolo. Argo Secondari e la prima organizzazione antifascista (1917–1922)*, Rome, Odradek, 2000, esp. pp. 126–139. On these matters see also the special issue of *Storia e documenti*, vol. 7, no. 1, 2002, with the article by U. Sereni, ‘Le barricate a Parma: una storia da ripensare’, pp. 141–183.
- 104 This comment was made in ‘Per la restaurazione dell’ordine in Italia’, *L’Osservatore romano*, 7–8 August 1922. Meanwhile, the Fascists were putting pressure on the Ministry of the Interior, as shown in E. Ferraris, *La marcia su Roma veduta dal Viminale*, Rome, Edizioni Leonardo, 1946, pp. 33–38.
- 105 The *Osservatore romano* of 9 August 1922 published this letter on its front page. Commenting on this, the *Giornale d’Italia* declared that it was ‘maybe the first time that the Vatican speaks as authoritatively on a theme which is not directly or indirectly connected with the Church’: see ‘Lettera del papa per la pacificazione’, *Giornale d’Italia*, 9 August 1922. On this letter see also the editorials ‘La parola del papa’, *Il Corriere d’Italia*, 9 August 1922, and ‘La parola di pace’, *Il Corriere d’Italia*, 10 August 1922.
- 106 B. Mussolini, ‘Il discorso di Udine’, in Mussolini, *Scritti e discorsi. La rivoluzione fascista*, pp. 308–309. In the aftermath of the strike Mussolini wrote the article ‘Continuando’, *Il Popolo d’Italia*, 6 August 1922.
- 107 ‘La piovra’, *Il Giornale d’Italia*, 10 August 1922.
- 108 ‘Nuovi conflitti in Italia’, *L’Osservatore romano*, 6 August 1922.
- 109 ‘La legge’, *Il Mondo*, 6 August 1922.
- 110 APC, XXVI legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. VIII, p. 8.281. Facta spoke on 9 August.
- 111 The quotation is from the same address to the Chamber of the Deputies, p. 8.286.
- 112 APC, XXVI legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. VIII, p. 8.288.
- 113 Ibid., p. 8.289. Rocco ended his speech by accusing the Socialists of being an anti-national force and of defending Fascism: see *ibid.*, pp. 8.290–8.292.
- 114 Ibid., pp. 8.315–16.
- 115 Ibid., p. 8.292, see also Repossi’s address on the same page.
- 116 Ibid., p. 8.295.
- 117 The episode and the quotations are from ‘Gravi incidenti alla Camera di ieri. L’on. Giunta minaccia di sparare: l’on. Arpinati depone la rivoltella’, *Il Corriere d’Italia*, 11 August 1922. See also ‘Un violentissimo incidente’, *L’Ordine Nuovo*, 10 August 1922; ‘Perché non avete tirato?’, *L’Ordine Nuovo*, 11 August 1922.
- 118 Both quotations are from APC, XXVI legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. VIII, pp. 8304–8305. Treves opened his speech saying that ‘the crisis begun on 19 July and condemning the internal policies of the Facta government was not resolved as the vote implied’, and he accused the Popolari and the liberals of not searching for other solutions.
- 119 APC, XXVI legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. VIII, pp. 8.310–1.
- 120 Ibid., p. 8.322.

Chapter 3

- 1 See the issues of *Il Popolo d’Italia* from August to September 1922 and P. Silva, *Io difendo la monarchia*, Rome, De Fonseca, 1946, p. 54. On the spread of appeals for a dictatorship, see E. Gentile, *Storia del partito fascista*, pp. 573–575.
- 2 G. Polverelli, ‘La legge o la scure’, *Il Popolo d’Italia*, 2 October 1922.
- 3 Volt, ‘Variazioni sul tema della dittatura’, *Il Popolo d’Italia*, 26 August 1922. See also the article by Polverelli quoted above.

- 4 As explicitly affirmed in Volt, 'Fascismo e stato', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 1 September 1922. But see also A. Lanzillo, 'La violenza del fascismo', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 16 agosto 1922; A. Lanzillo, 'L'uomo e la gerarchia', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 16 ottobre 1922, G. Polverelli, 'La marcia su Roma', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 16 August 1922.
- 5 See again Volt, 'Fascismo e stato'.
- 6 'Il fascismo e il Mezzogiorno d'Italia (intervista con l'on. Mussolini)', *Il Mattino*, 12–13 August 1922.
- 7 Polverelli, 'La marcia su Roma'.
- 8 See 'Il partito fascista smentisce le voci di un colpo di stato', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 5 October 1922 (the same declaration also appeared in *Il Popolo d'Italia* the same day) and 'Un comunicato della Direzione del Partito su la pretesa «marcia su Roma»', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 7 October 1922.
- 9 'Che cosa significa la "marcia su Roma" secondo il segretario del fascio', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 6 October 1922. Similar was Balbo's declaration, see: 'Crisi nazionale e orientamento delle milizie fasciste', *La Nazione*, 22–23 October 1922.
- 10 'La piovra', *Il Giornale d'Italia*, 10 August 1922. See also 'Il farmacista, Discorsi di farmacia. La Marcia su Roma', *Il Giornale d'Italia*, 17 August 1922; 'Legalità', *Il Giornale d'Italia*, 8 October 1922; 'Un'intervista di Mussolini sugli scopi del fascismo', *Il Giornale d'Italia*, 10 October 1922; 'L'agguato', *Il Giornale d'Italia*, 13 October 1922. While Bergamini fully supported Fascism, showing that he was not completely aware of the steps that were being taken against the liberal State, Sidney Sonnino's standing was far more ambiguous. *Il Giornale d'Italia* was Sonnino's voice: see S. Sonnino, *Carteggio 1916/1922*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 1975, pp. 738–740, letter of Sonnino to Bergamini, 11 September 1922 and the letter of Bergamini to Sonnino, 7 September 1922. See also 'Che cosa significa la "marcia su Roma" secondo il segretario del fascio', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 6 October 1922. A similar declaration was made by Balbo: see 'Crisi nazionale e orientamento delle milizie fasciste', *La Nazione*, 22–23 October 1922.
- 11 'Il dovere', *Il Giornale d'Italia*, 17 October 1922. This was also the position taken in the article P.S., 'La rivoluzione di destra', *Il Mattino*, 11–12 August 1922.
- 12 'Manovre parlamentari', *Il Mattino*, 7–8 October 1922; 'La marcia su Roma', *Il Secolo Nuovo*, 7 October 1922; 'Faranno la rivoluzione', *Il Secolo Nuovo*, 14 October 1922; 'Il Gabinetto di fronte alla situazione interna', *La Nazione*, 7 October 1922; 'Il dovere', *Il Giornale d'Italia*, 17 October 1922.
- 13 'I valori morali della tradizione politica. A proposito di dittatura', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 8 August 1922.
- 14 The only exception to this editorial strategy, before October 1922, was an unclear article on Mussolini's speech in Udine: see 'Il fascismo e lo stato. Commenti al discorso dell'on. Mussolini', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 22 September 1922.
- 15 Renzo De Felice did not acknowledge that the Fascists sought to make the public receptive to the possibility of a march on Rome even before the month of October. This was a clear strategy to prepare the Italian public for what could (and did) actually happen. In this sense, the relation between secrecy and disclosure when it comes to the March on Rome could be viewed in a different light. See De Felice, *Mussolini il fascista. La conquista del potere*, pp. 336–337.
- 16 'La via', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 12 October 1922. See also 'Dalla fazione allo stato', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 15 October 1922.
- 17 See 'La democrazia e le dittature', *L'Avanti!*, 19 September 1922.
- 18 'Il conflitto che non ci sarà', *L'Avanti!*, 15–16 October 1922.
- 19 'Il "colpo di stato"', *Il Comunista*, 24 October 1922.
- 20 Balbo, *Diario 1922*, p. 201.
- 21 See Lyttelton, *The Seizure of Power*, pp. 89–90; Gentile, *Storia del partito fascista*, p. 669 and De Felice, *Mussolini il fascista. La conquista del potere*, p. 348; Balbo, *Diario 1922*, p. 201.

- 22 PRO, FO 371/7650, Graham's report to Lord Curzon, 16 August 1922. In a letter of 22 August (in PRO, FO 371/7659) Graham expressed the same idea to Curzon.
- 23 PRO, FO 371/7650, Torr's memorandum, 31 August 1922.
- 24 PRO, FO 371/7650, Torr's memorandum, 6 October 1922.
- 25 PRO, FO 371/7650, report of the military attaché to the Minister of the Foreign Affairs, 19 October 1922.
- 26 'L'odierno Convegno fascista in un'intervista con l'on. Grandi', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 13 August 1922; 'I lavori del Comitato Centrale del Partito Nazionale Fascista', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 15 August 1922. On this congress see Tasca, *Nascita e avvento del fascismo*, pp. 392–394; A. Repaci, *La marcia su Roma*, Milan, Rizzoli, 1972, pp. 331–334; Gentile, *Storia del partito fascista*, pp. 615–619; De Felice, *Mussolini il fascista. La conquista del potere*, pp. 298–391.
- 27 For Tasca, Facta had the idea of inviting D'Annunzio to the victory celebration of 4 November so that he might give a speech in favour of national pacification: see Tasca, *Nascita e avvento del fascismo*, p. 417. This is also confirmed by L. Albertini, *Epistolario 1911–1926*, vol. III, *Il dopoguerra*, Milan, Mondadori, 1968, p. 1592 (lett. 1356, D'Atri to Albertini, 22 October 1922). In the same days, voices circulated of a possible march on Rome by D'Annunzio himself: see ACS, MI, PS, A5 'Agitazioni pro Fiume e Dalmazia', b. 4, fasc. 32, news from Fiume, anonymous, 7 December 1922.
- 28 'Il fascismo e il Mezzogiorno d'Italia (intervista con l'on. Mussolini)', *Il Mattino*, 12–13 August 1922.
- 29 The official letter was published in 'Un colpo mancino vibrato al Fascismo dal "Giornale d'Italia"', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 23 August 1922. See De Felice, *Mussolini il fascista. La conquista del potere*, pp. 322–323.
- 30 The previous month there had been frequent references to this issue: see 'La fede monarchica del fascismo', *Il Mattino*, 12–13 September 1922. On the secret negotiations with the King, see De Felice, *Mussolini il fascista. La conquista del potere*, pp. 258–259.
- 31 The Udine speech is published in B. Mussolini, 'Il discorso di Udine', in *Scritti e discorsi. La rivoluzione fascista (23 marzo 1919–28 ottobre 1922)*, Milan, Hoepli 1934, pp. 307–322. These quotations are from pp. 308–309.
- 32 B. Mussolini, 'Esercito e fascismo', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 14 October 1922; 'Un articolo di Mussolini contro il generale Badoglio', *Il Corriere d'Italia*, 15 October 1922; 'Esercito e fasci', *La Nazione*, 15–16 October 1922 and 'Il conflitto che non ci sarà!', *L'Avanti!*, 15–16 October 1922. On these issues, see Rochat, *L'esercito italiano*, pp. 401–7; De Felice, *Mussolini il fascista. La conquista del potere*, pp. 322–327; Gentile, *Storia del partito fascista*, pp. 646–648. On the relationship between the army and Fascists see also M. Mondini, *Le politica delle armi. Il ruolo dell'esercito nell'avvento del fascismo*, Rome-Bari, Laterza 2006. Expressions of loyalty towards the King and the army were a central tool for the acquisition of new support for Fascism before the March on Rome: see ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 138, fasc. Napoli, telegram from the Prefect of Naples to the Ministry of the Interior, 24 October 1922.
- 33 See 'Regolamento di disciplina per la milizia fascista', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 3 October 1922. See also Repaci, *La marcia su Roma*, p. 345; Gentile, *Storia del partito fascista*, pp. 537–539 and p. 635. The High Command for the March was designated in August 1922: see ACS, Carte De Bono, De Vecchi's letters to De Bono, 18 August 1922 and 24 August 1922.
- 34 For De Felice, Mussolini decided to 'take action' as early as 12 October, after a meeting with D'Annunzio: see De Felice, *Mussolini il fascista. La conquista del potere*, p. 336–343. Differently, Ignazio Silone says that the plan for the March was presented by Mussolini to the central committee of the Fasci on 29 September: see I. Silone, *Il fascismo. Origini e sviluppo*, Milan, Mondadori 2002, p. 135.

- 35 Emilio Gentile has reconstructed the steps which led to the decision of holding the March: see Gentile, *Storia del partito fascista*, pp. 651–653. For some details on the meetings, see Repaci, *La marcia su Roma*, pp. 407–428 and De Felice, *Mussolini il fascista. La conquista del potere*, pp. 343–344.
- 36 Chiurco, *Storia della rivoluzione fascista*, pp. 15–16.
- 37 Gentile, *Storia del partito fascista*, pp. 653–654; De Felice, *Mussolini il fascista. La conquista del potere*, pp. 344–345. See also ACS, MRF, b. 146, circular of the meeting sent from Boedighera on 17 October 1922.
- 38 This quotation and the previous one are from: Chiurco, *Storia della rivoluzione fascista*, p. 20.
- 39 Balbo, *Diario 1922*, pp. 196–200. On the lack of men in Rome for the coup d'état, see G. Candeloro, *Storia dell'Italia moderna. VIII. La prima guerra mondiale, il dopoguerra, l'avvento del fascismo*, Milan, Feltrinelli, 1979, pp. 402–403.
- 40 On details about these negotiations, see Repaci, *La marcia su Roma*, pp. 357–406, 429–439. ACS, TUC, 1922, Incoming messages, 26.10–2.11, the Prefect of Naples to the Ministry of the Interior, 26 October 1922, h. 2.
- 41 Emilio Gentile defines the congress in Naples as «a symbolic act for completing the Fascist conquest of the country before its rise to power» (Gentile, *Storia del partito fascista*, p. 657). For reliable numbers for this demonstration, see the report of the military attaché to the Foreign Office, 25 October 1922, in PRO, FO 371/7651. The *Popolo d'Italia* provided a higher estimate: see 'Quarantamila fascisti e ventimila operai sfilano a Napoli salutati da cinquecentomila cittadini plaudenti', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 25 October 1922. On this, see also 'Sempre sul congresso fascista. Cifre e dati fra esagerazioni e restrizioni', *L'Osservatore romano*, 27 October 1922.
- 42 'Trentamila camicie nere converranno oggi a Napoli per l'inizio del congresso fascista', *Il Mattino*, 24–25 October 1922.
- 43 The Military Attaché to the Foreign Office, 25 October 1922, in PRO, FO 371/7651.
- 44 The Military Attaché to the Foreign Office, 26 October 1922, in PRO, FO 371/7651.
- 45 The Military Attaché to the Foreign Office, 27 October 1922, in PRO, FO 371/7659.
- 46 Mussolini, 'Il discorso di Napoli' in Mussolini, *Scritti e discorsi. La rivoluzione fascista (23 marzo 1919–28 ottobre 1922)*, Milan, Hoepli, 1934, pp. 339–350 (esp. p. 340).
- 47 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 138, fasc. Napoli, phonogram from the Prefecture of Naples, 24 October 1922, h. 18.50 and h. 20.15. The fact that the speeches at the San Carlo theatre and in Piazza del Plebiscito were strictly connected was also noted by the English Military Attaché: see the report from the Military Attaché to the Foreign Office, 25 October 1922, in PRO, FO 371/7651. On this episode see Tasca, *Nascita e avvento del fascismo*, p. 443.
- 48 De Felice, *Mussolini il fascista. La conquista del potere*, pp. 355–357.
- 49 'La crisi conseguenza dell'adunata di Napoli', *Il Mattino*, 28–29 October 1922.
- 50 Gentile, *Storia del partito fascista*, pp. 637–642. On the request for Giolitti's return into government, see G. De Rosa, *Storia del Partito popolare*, pp. 274–298.
- 51 Everybody agreed on this: see De Rosa, *Storia del Partito popolare*, p. 293.
- 52 Volt, 'L'Esercito fascista resterà', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 24 October 1922. Not everybody thought that this should be the Milizia's function: Balbo, for example, thought that the Milizia needed to be transformed and to be absorbed in line with the «concept of armed nation». See 'Crisi nazionale e orientamento delle milizie fasciste', *La Nazione*, 22–23 October 1922.
- 53 Volt, 'L'Esercito fascista resterà' [The italics are mine].
- 54 See ACS, TUC, 1922, Outgoing messages, 6–18 October, telegram from the President of the Council to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, 13 October 1922.
- 55 See Commissioner Mosconi's telegram about Alto Adige to the Ministry of the Interior, 6 October 1922, in ACS, TUC, 1922, Incoming messages, 6–16 October. See also ACS, TUC, 1922, Incoming messages, 6–16 October, the Prefect of

- Brescia to the Ministry of the Interior, 10 October 1922, h. 17.40; the Prefect Ferrario to the Ministry of the Interior, 16 October 1922, h. 15.25.
- 56 ACS, TUC, 1922, Outgoing messages, 6–18 October, telegram from the Ministry of the Interior to the Prefect of Milan, 10 October 1922.
 - 57 See ACS, TUC, 1922, Outgoing messages, 18–30 October. See the requests from the Prefect of Naples, in ACS, TUC, 1922, Incoming messages, 6–16 October.
 - 58 ACS, TUC, 1922, Outgoing messages, 18–30 October, telegram from the Ministry of the Interior to the Prefect of Naples, 23 October 1922, h. 12.
 - 59 Letter from the Ministry of the Interior to the Prefects, 7 October 1922, 5.15 pm in ACS, TUC, 1922, Outgoing messages, 6–18 October. See Saija, *I prefetti italiani*, pp. 394–398.
 - 60 ACS, TUC, 1922, Outgoing messages, 6–18 October, telegram from the President of the Council to the King, 7 October 1922, 6 pm.
 - 61 M. Michaelis, ‘Il generale Pugliese e la difesa di Roma’, *La Rassegna mensile di Israel*, vol. XXVIII, nos. 6–7, 1962, pp. 262–283 and De Felice, *Mussolini il fascista. La conquista del potere*, pp. 322–323.
 - 62 ACS, TUC, 1922, Outgoing messages, 18–30 October, telegram from the President of the Council to the King, 24 October 1922, 9.40 pm.
 - 63 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 105, telegram from the Ministry of the Interior to the Prefects, 26 October 1922, 12.10; two hours later, at 4.30 pm, the Ministry of the Interior sent in a correction, adding: «the government orders also to give all power to the military authorities at the first signs of such insurrectional acts». See ACS, TUC, 18.10–30.10, telegram from the Ministry of the Interior to the Prefects, 26 October 1922, 4.30 pm.
 - 64 Telegram from the War Office to the military command, 26 October 1922, 5 pm.
 - 65 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Ancona, telegram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 27 October 1922, 7.10 pm.
 - 66 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Ancona, telegram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 28 October 1922, 5 pm.
 - 67 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Ferrara, telegram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 27 October 1922, h. 8.45 pm.
 - 68 Chiurco, *Storia della rivoluzione fascista*, p. 70.
 - 69 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Genova, telegram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 26 October 1922, 9.10 pm.
 - 70 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Alessandria, telegram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 28 October 1922, 1 pm. In Padua the situation was similar: see ACS, MRF, b. 146, telegram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior.
 - 71 Telegram from the provisional chief of the military corps in Bologna to the Ministry of the Interior, 19 October 1922, in ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 100.
 - 72 ‘Ora decisiva’, *L’Idea Nazionale*, 27 October 1922.
 - 73 De Rosa, *Storia del Partito popolare*, pp. 274–275. See also ‘L’appello ai popolari’, *Il Corriere d’Italia*, 22 October 1922.
 - 74 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 84, the superintendent of Rome to the Ministry of the Interior, 10 October 1922.

Chapter 4

- 1 Chiurco, *Storia della rivoluzione fascista*, vol. 5, part II, pp. 38–39, 56, 139. For the mobilisation orders see ACS, MRF, b. 146 and ‘L’ordine ai fascisti: tenersi pronti!’, *La Nazione*, 27 October 1922.
- 2 ACS, MRF, b. 146, Handwritten document without any date and entitled ‘Marcia su Roma. Ordini di operazione per la provincia di Ferrara’, 3 pp. See also the following document entitled ‘Distribuzione ed assegnazione dei reparti per i vari obiettivi’, 5 pp.

- 3 Chiurco, *Storia della rivoluzione fascista*, pp. 50 and 99.
- 4 See what is stated by E. Ferraris, *La marcia su Roma veduta dal Viminale*, Rome, Edizioni Leonardo, 1946.
- 5 In the night of 27 October the mobilisation started in Pisa, Foggia, Cremona, Livorno, Treviso, Florence, Perugia, Rovigo and Siena: see ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106 and the files on these cities for this period.
- 6 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Pisa, telegram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 27 October 1922, h. 12.10 and h. 2.10 and 5.27 pm.
- 7 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Pisa, telegram from the Prefect of Pisa to the Ministry of the Interior, 28 October 1922, h. 11. See also 'Le operazioni fasciste in Toscana', *La Nazione*, 28 October 1922; 'Migliaia di fascisti pisani partiti per Roma', *La Nazione*, 28 October 1922; 'Il giornale fascista di Pisa annuncia la 'marcia su Roma'', *Il Giornale d'Italia*, 28 October 1922.
- 8 ACS, TUC, 1922, Incoming messages, 26 October – 2 November, telegram from the Prefect of Pisa to the Ministry of the Interior, 27 October 1922, h. 10.30 pm.
- 9 *Popolo d'Italia*, 28 October 1922; Chiurco, *Storia della rivoluzione fascista*, pp. 141–145. On the occupation in Siena see 'Il prefetto di Siena cede i poteri all'autorità militare', *La Nazione*, 28 October 1922.
- 10 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Cremona, telegram from the Prefect of Milan (news from Cremona) to the Ministry of the Interior, 27 October 1922, h. 11.45 pm.
- 11 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Cremona, telegram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 28 October 1922, h. 2.40 pm and R. Farinacci, *Squadristismo. Dal mio diario della vigilia (1919–1922)*, Rome, Edizioni Ardita, 1932, p. 173. See also 'Un conflitto a Cremona durante l'occupazione fascista', *La Nazione*, 28 October 1922; 'Gli avvenimenti di ieri in città. Tre morti e venti feriti', *Cremona Nuova*, 28 October 1922. See also ACS, Carte Michele Bianchi, b. 1, fasc. 2, Roberto Farinacci to Michele Bianchi, 3 February 1923. According to General Pugliese seven deaths occurred, including both Fascists and anti-Fascists see E. Pugliese, *Io difendo l'esercito*, Rispoli editore, Napoli 1946, pp. 138–139.
- 12 See Farinacci, *Squadristismo*, p. 174. Farinacci's version is confirmed by ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Cremona, 28 October 1922, h. 2.20 pm.
- 13 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Cremona, telegram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 28 October 1922, h. 2.20 pm. On the kidnapping and getaway of the head of police Di Battista, see Saija, *I prefetti italiani*, p. 408.
- 14 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Bari, telegram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 28 October 1922, h. 12.20; phonogram from the sub-Prefecture of Foggia, received on 29 October 1922, h. 3.40 pm; phonogram arriving from Bari, 29 October 1922, h. 3 pm.
- 15 See Saija, *I prefetti italiani*, pp. 424–427. Perugia is described as the 'capital of the revolution' in Chiurco, *Storia della rivoluzione fascista*, p. 28.
- 16 Chiurco, *Storia della rivoluzione fascista*, pp. 28–29; U. Zamboni, 'La marcia su Roma. Appunti inediti. L'azione della colonna Zamboni', *Gerarchia*, n. 10, October 1928, pp. 767–770. See also 'Una pagina di storia', *L'Assalto*, 7 November 1922 and ACS, TUC, 1922, Incoming messages, 26 October – 2 November, telegram from the Prefect of Perugia to the Ministry of the Interior, 27 October 1922, h. 9.45 pm.
- 17 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Perugia, telegram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 28 October 1922. The arrival of the Fascist leaders averted the possibility of a fight with the military, as noted in M. Isnenghi, 'La marcia su Roma', pp. 313–329. The agreement between the Fascists and the Prefect was also clear in 'Il prefetto di Perugia cede la città ai fascisti', *La Nazione*, 28 October 1922; 'Perugia in possesso dei fascisti', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 29 October 1922.

- 18 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Perugia, telegram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 28 October 1922, See also PRO, FO 371/7651, Perugia's vice-consul to the Foreign Office, 28 October 1922, f. 247.
- 19 Chiurco gave a slightly different version of the whole story in *Storia della rivoluzione fascista*, pp. 32–35.
- 20 See ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, in particular the files from the aforementioned towns.
- 21 MRF, b. 146, Document entitled 'Marcia su Roma. Ordini di operazione per la provincia di Ferrara'.
- 22 ACS, TUC, 1922, Incoming messages, 26 October – 2 November, telegram from the Prefect of Piacenza to the Ministry of the Interior, 28 October 1922, h. 2.20.
- 23 ACS, TUC, 1922, Incoming messages, 26 October – 2 November, telegram from the Prefect of Piacenza to the Ministry of the Interior, 28 October 1922, h. 10.35. See also 'La prefettura di Piacenza in mano ai fascisti', *La Nazione*, 28 October 1922; 'La situazione a Piacenza', *Cremona Nuova*, 29 October 1922; 'L'occupazione di Piacenza', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 31 October 1922.
- 24 Balbo, *Diario 1922*, pp. 202 and 205.
- 25 Pugliese, *L'esercito e la cosiddetta marcia*, pp. 53, 57–58 and 72. On Pugliese's plan see M. Michaelis, 'Il generale Pugliese e la difesa di Roma', *La Rassegna mensile di Israel*, vol. XXVIII, nos. 6–7, 1962, p. 267–268; Pugliese, *Io difendo l'esercito*, pp. 14–19; M. Soleri, *Memorie*, Turin, Einaudi, 1949, pp. 150–151.
- 26 On the Tuscan provinces see ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106. The data reported in Chiurco and those of the Ministry of the Interior are sometimes different, and need to be analysed one by one.
- 27 See ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Chieti, the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 28 October 1922, h. 11.50 pm; phonogram from Chieti to the Ministry of the Interior, 27 October 1922, h. 7.20 pm; the Prefect of Florence to the Ministry of the Interior, 28 October 1922, h. 10.25 and 11.25 pm; fasc. Florence, the Prefect to Ministry of the Interior, 28 October 1922, s.h., 7.55; fasc. Aquila, telegram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 28 October 1922, h. 9.55 pm; fasc. Ancona, telegram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 28 October 1922, h. 10.40. See also Chiurco, *Storia della rivoluzione fascista*, pp. 45–48; ACS, MRF, b. 146, report by the Neapolitan Cohort, 3rd *centuria*, 8 November 1922, and report by the Neapolitan cohort, 1st *centuria*, 4 November 1922, and Michele Carbone, *Relazione sanitaria durante la marcia su Roma*.
- 28 Chiurco, *Storia della rivoluzione fascista*, p. 161.
- 29 Dino Perrone, 'Diario', in Chiurco, *Storia della rivoluzione fascista*, p. 166.
- 30 Chiurco, *Storia della rivoluzione fascista*, p. 176. On Monterotondo in those days see also Salandra, *Memorie politiche*, p. 26.
- 31 ACS, MRF, b. 146, Report on the March on Rome by the 3rd Legion from Florence, 4 November 1922.
- 32 Zamboni, *La marcia su Roma*, pp. 767–770.
- 33 Chiurco, *Storia della rivoluzione fascista*, p. 178.
- 34 Chiurco, *Storia della rivoluzione fascista*, pp. 186–197.
- 35 This is quite an important point, since it was made the object of Fascist propaganda from the very beginning, and on the anti-Fascist front Salvemini used it in order to highlight the responsibilities of the King and the army in the Fascist seizure of power: see G. Salvemini, *Scritti sul fascismo. Volume I. Lezioni di Harvard. L'Italia dal 1919 al 1929*, Milan, Feltrinelli, 1963, p. 607. Nonetheless, it is quite complicated to determine exactly how many men were at the assembly points, since the number of the departures does not tally with that of the arrivals. The numbers I have quoted match those given by Tasca, who used different sources: see Tasca, *Nascita e avvento del fascismo*, p. 519. I do not agree with Emilio Gentile's choice to accept Pugliese's numbers: see Gentile, *Storia del partito fascista*, pp.

- 668–669; nor do I accept the underestimation of the numbers of the participants to be found in Repaci, *La marcia su Roma*, pp. 459–462.
- 36 *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 28 October 1922. Similar points are raised in 'Un voto che si compie', *L'Assalto*, 28 October 1922 and in 'L'ora è scoccata', *Cremona Nuova*, 28 October 1922. No reference to the mobilisation was present in *Alalà*, the newspaper of the Fascio of Carrara, published on 28 October.
 - 37 See, for example, the *Corriere della Sera* which had a small article on the 'Mobilitazione fascista in Toscana', but was much more attentive to the government crisis, as in the article 'Le dimissioni del Ministero Facta. Il re giunto a Roma comincerà oggi le consultazioni', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 28 October 1922. Nonetheless, news of the mobilisation was given again at the very end of the paper: see 'La mobilitazione generale fascista. Tutti i poteri all'autorità militare', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 28 October 1922, p. 5.
 - 38 'L'ora di Kapp', *La Giustizia*, 28 October 1922.
 - 39 'Crisi storica', *L'Idea Nazionale*, 28 October 1922.
 - 40 'La mobilitazione generale dei "Sempre pronti"', *L'Idea Nazionale*, 28 October 1922.
 - 41 See the previous chapter and the accusation brought against the government with regard to this point by General Pugliese in *Io difendo l'esercito*, p. 26. This text should nonetheless be viewed within the context in which it was written, namely after the collapse of Fascism and the Second World War.
 - 42 Michaelis, *Il generale Pugliese e la difesa di Roma*, pp. 275–276; Pugliese, *Io difendo l'esercito*, pp. 54–56. There is no mention of this meeting in Soleri, *Memorie*, which provides a detailed account of those days.
 - 43 Pugliese, *Io difendo l'esercito*, pp. 54–55.
 - 44 ACS, Verbali del Consiglio dei Ministri, 2 August 1921–13 October 1923. The minutes are published in Soleri, *Memorie*, pp. 151–152.
 - 45 Telegram from the President of the Council Facta to the Prefects and commanders of the kingdom, in Repaci, *La marcia su Roma*, pp. 843–844. The proclamation of the state of siege is published in Tasca, *Nascita e avvento del fascismo*, p. 515.
 - 46 On the state of siege in Italian modern history see R. Martucci, *Storia costituzionale italiana*, Rome, Carocci, 2000, p. 150.
 - 47 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Verona, telegram from the Prefect of Verona to the Ministry of the Interior, 28 October 1922, h. 8 pm and telegram from the Prefect of Mantua to the Ministry of the Interior, 28 October 1922, h. 11.10.
 - 48 Saija interprets this situation differently: see Saija, *I prefetti italiani*, pp. 404–405.
 - 49 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Milano, telegram from the Prefect of Milan to the Ministry of the Interior, 28 October 1922, no time given.
 - 50 'L'occupazione della caserma di finanza', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 29 October 1922; 'I due eserciti fronte a fronte a Milano. Nessun incidente grave. L'aspetto della città', *L'Avanti!*, 29–30 October 1922; Chiurco, *Storia della rivoluzione fascista*, pp. 79–81.
 - 51 'Il glorioso 12° bersaglieri fraternizza con le milizie fasciste', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 29 October 1922; 'Il glorioso 12° bersaglieri fraternizza con le milizie fasciste', *L'Arbitro*, 29 October 1922.
 - 52 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Alessandria, telegram from the Prefect of Alessandria to the Ministry of the Interior, 28 October 1922, h. 11.55.
 - 53 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Alessandria, telegram from the Prefect of Alessandria to the Ministry of the Interior, 28 October 1922, h. 1 pm. Saija seems to argue that the Giolittian influence played a role in the way in which the Prefects acted in Piedmont, but it does not take into account the role of the army: see Saija, *I prefetti italiani*, pp. 402–403.
 - 54 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Alessandria, telegram from the Prefect of Alessandria to the Ministry of the Interior, 28 October 1922, h. 11.55 pm. See also Chiurco, *Storia della rivoluzione fascista*, pp. 38–41 and R. Farinacci, *Storia della*

- rivoluzione fascista. L'insurrezione rossa e la vittoria dei fasci*, vol. 2, Cremona, Cremona Nuova, 1938, p. 431.
- 55 Spriano, *Storia del Partito comunista italiano. I. Da Bordiga a Gramsci*, Turin, Einaudi, 1990, pp. 232–233.
 - 56 This idea was harshly opposed by the Socialist Party: see Silone, *Il fascismo*, pp. 144–145.
 - 57 This has been a very important debate in the historiography on the event, and the role of the King in this situation was certainly of paramount importance: see Lytton, *The Seizure of Power*, pp. 90–93; Santomassimo, *La marcia su Roma*, pp. 87–91. On the fear of civil as a leading element that contributed to this decision, see 'La via d'uscita', *Il Giornale d'Italia*, 29 October 1922.
 - 58 Michaelis, *Il generale Pugliese e la difesa di Roma*, p. 278.
 - 59 'L'adesione dei partiti nazionali al movimento fascista', *La Nazione*, 29–30 October 1922.
 - 60 ACS, MI, Ps, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Ancona, telegram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 28 October 1922, h. 5 pm. See also Saija, *I prefetti italiani*, p. 420; Chiurco, *Storia della rivoluzione fascista*, pp. 41–42.
 - 61 M. Michelozzi, *Le origini del fascismo nell'anconetano*, Urbino, Aralia editore, 1974, pp. 57–58. See Saija, *I prefetti italiani*, p. 420.
 - 62 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Padova, telegram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 29 October 1922, s.h.
 - 63 ASSME, A1 (cat. 'Memorie storiche'), b. 021, Divisione territoriale di Padova, 'Memorie storiche 1922 redatte dal comandante Giuseppe Boriani'.
 - 64 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Bari, phonogram of the Prefecture of Foggia, 29 October 1922, h. 3.40 pm. See also the report of the Action Committee of the Fascio of Naples to the *Directorate*, 4 November 1922, in MRF, b. 146.
 - 65 ACS, TUC, 1922, Incoming messages, 26 October – 2 November, telegram from the Prefect of Genoa to the Ministry of the Interior, 29 October 1922, h. 8, 15. See also 'Incidenti alla prefettura di Genova', *L'Idea Nazionale*, 30 October 1922 and 'L'occupazione della prefettura di Genova', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 31 October 1922.
 - 66 ACS, TUC, 1922, Incoming messages, 26 October – 2 November, telegram from the Prefect of Reggio Emilia to the Ministry of the Interior, 30 October 1922, h. 12.30.
 - 67 On the orders for the Cremona squads to depart see Farinacci, *Squadrisimo*, pp. 182–183. See also ACS, MRF, b. 146, De Bono to Farinacci, 28 October 1922, h. 22.20.
 - 68 B. Mussolini, 'La situazione', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 29 October 1922 and 'Il proclama', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 29 October 1922.
 - 69 '«Il Comando militare fascista mette il «veto» alla pubblicazione del «Corriere della Sera» e lo toglie l'indomani», *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 31 October 1922. The quotation is from Chiurco, *Storia della rivoluzione fascista*, p. 79.
 - 70 Giacinto Motta to Luigi Albertini, 28 October 1922 in Albertini, *Epistolario*, pp. 1993–1994.
 - 71 'La crisi nazionale e l'incarico a Mussolini di comporre il nuovo Governo', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 30 October 1922.
 - 72 See also G. Giardina, 'Ricordi dell'Ordine Nuovo', *Il Ponte*, XXI, no. 10, 1965, pp. 1303–1310. The same day the printing works of *Paese*, of the weekly *il Monocolo* and of *Epoca* were destroyed: see *Il Corriere della Sera*, 30 October 1922. Moreover the print shops of the *Avanti!* were occupied and destroyed in Rome and Milan: 'Ultime di cronaca. La mattinata in città. L'occupazione dell'Avanti!', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 30 October 1922 and *il Popolo d'Italia*, 31 October 1922; 'Come fu distrutto l'Avanti dagli appunti di un cronista', *L'Avanti!*, 14 November 1922.
 - 73 'La nostra posizione', *L'Avanti!*, 29–30 October 1922.
 - 74 Pugliese, *Io difendo l'esercito*, p. 91.

- 75 Emilio De Bono to the General Inspector of the 5^a zone, 28 October 1922, h. 10.30 pm; Emilio De Bono and Michele Bianchi to Attilio Teruzzi, 29 October 1922, h. 8 in ACS, MRF, b. 146. The sabotaging of the railway lines by the army led to the creation of two others assembly points for the squads in Civitavecchia and Orte: see Repaci, *La marcia su Roma*, p. 459, n. 1 and Tasca, *Nascita e avvento del fascismo*, p. 474.
- 76 Chiurco, *Storia della rivoluzione fascista*, p. 169.
- 77 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Roma, phonogram from the police in Rome to the Ministry of the Interior, 29 October 1922, h. 3.15 pm and 7.25 pm. See also ACS, MRF, b. 146, Inspectorate of the 7th zone, Santa Marinella group, 29 October 1922.
- 78 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Rome, phonogram from the police in Rome to the Ministry of the Interior, 29 October 1922, fasc. Comando del corpo d'armata di Bologna, 'Relazione sugli avvenimenti svoltisi nella provincia di Bologna dal giorno 26 ottobre al 5 novembre c.s.', 6 November 1922; fasc. Caserta, telegram from the Prefect of Caserta to the Ministry of the Interior, 29 October 1922, h. 11.15. Pugliese, *Io difendo l'esercito*, p. 67 and 90. A similar description is provided by Balbo, *Diario 1922*, pp. 210–211.
- 79 'Gli stolidi provvedimenti dell'Autorità Militare', *L'Idea Nazionale*, 29 October 1922. See also PRO, FO 371/7659, Graham report to the Foreign Office, 29 October 1922, 4 pm.
- 80 'Decisione suprema', *L'Idea Nazionale*, 29 October 1922.
- 81 'La rivoluzione nazionale', *L'Idea Nazionale*, 30 October 1922. Similar tones were used by A. Borrelli in 'Sediziosi in nome del Re', *La Nazione*, 29–30 October 1922 and in 'Il Re disapprova lo stato d'assedio', *Il Giornale d'Italia*, 29 October 1922.
- 82 B. Mussolini, 'La situazione', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 29 October 1922.
- 83 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Bologna, Comando del corpo d'armata di Bologna, 'Cenno ad alcuni episodi di carattere personale'.
- 84 A despatch was sent by the consul in Bologna to the Foreign Office on 28 October 1922 in PRO, FO 371/7651 reporting things similarly.
- 85 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, Comando del corpo d'armata di Bologna, 'Relazione sugli avvenimenti svoltisi nella provincia di Bologna dal giorno 26 ottobre al 5 novembre c.a.'
- 86 The liberation of the prisoners was not something which happened only in Bologna, as similar cases occurred in Montevarchi, Vigevano, Savona, Cremona and Foligno (see ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106) and in Florence, even though I have found only evidence of this in newspapers: see 'Detenuti fascisti liberati dai loro compagni dalle carceri di Asciano', *La Nazione*, 29–30 October 1922; 'Migliaia di fascisti ottengono la liberazione dei loro compagni prigionieri per reati politici', *La Nazione*, 31 October 1922.
- 87 Telegram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 28 October 1922, h. 5.25 pm and telegram from the jail's director to the Ministry of the Interior, 29 October 1922 in ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Bologna.
- 88 Comando del corpo d'armata di Bologna, 'Relazione sugli avvenimenti svoltisi nella provincia di Bologna dal giorno 26 ottobre al 5 novembre c.a.', 6 November 1922, p. 6, in ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Bologna. On the fight in Bologna see 'L'occupazione di tutte le provincie dell'Emilia Romagna', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 31 October 1922; 'Conflitti sanguinosi a Bologna', *L'Idea Nazionale*, 30 October 1922; 'Quattro morti e vari feriti a Bologna. Una caserma incendiata', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 30 October 1922; 'Quattro morti e vari feriti a Bologna', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 31 October 1922. See also Pini, *Le legioni bolognesi in armi*, p. 25.
- 89 Pini, *Le legioni bolognesi in armi*, pp. 27–30. See also ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Bologna, telegram, 30 October 1922, h. 10.45, pm. The nationalists are only mentioned in Comando del corpo d'armata di Bologna, 'Relazione sugli

- avvenimenti svoltisi nella provincia di Bologna dal giorno 26 ottobre al 5 novembre c.a.', 6 November 1922, p. 6, in ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Bologna.
- 90 ACS, Carte Michele Bianchi, b. 1, fasc. 2 'Marcia su Roma', letter of the vice-secretary of Bologna to Michele Bianchi, 10 April 1923. On the death of the post officer see ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Bologna, Comando del corpo d'armata di Bologna, 'Relazione sugli avvenimenti svoltisi nella provincia di Bologna dal giorno 26 ottobre al giorno 5 novembre c.a.', 6 November 1922.
- 91 PRO, FO 371/7651, the consul of Bologna to the Foreign Office, 30 October 1922, f. 248.
- 92 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Bologna, Comando del corpo d'armata di Bologna, 'Cenno ad alcuni episodi di carattere personale', p. 3 and the attached leaflet, which was posted in various areas of the city.
- 93 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Bologna, Comando del corpo d'armata, 'Relazione sugli avvenimenti svoltisi nella provincia di Bologna dal giorno 26 ottobre al 5 novembre c.a.'
- 94 Santomassimo, *La marcia su Roma*, pp. 83–85; De Felice, *Mussolini il rivoluzionario. La conquista del potere*, pp. 363–374.
- 95 Tasca, *Nascita e avvento del fascismo*, p. 454.
- 96 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Roma, telegram from the head of police in Rome to the Ministry of the Interior, 29 October 1922, h. 1,15. See also ACS, MRF, b. 146, Gino Calza Bini to the High Command of the Fascist militia, 29 October 1922.
- 97 A. Del Vita, *La marcia su Roma con le centurie scelte di Arezzo*, Arezzo, Federazione provinciale fascista, 1924, pp. 9–10.
- 98 On the arrival of the squads: ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Roma, telegram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 30 October 1922, s.h.; 'Il Bollettino n. 4 della legione ferrarese', *Il Balilla*, 30 October 1922; Chiurco, *Storia della rivoluzione fascista*, pp. 180–181; 202–203. See also 'L'entrata delle squadre fasciste', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 31 October 1922. The departure of the aeroplanes was filmed in Umberto Paradisi, *A noi!*, 1922.
- 99 Ferraris, *La marcia su Roma*, pp. 126–127.
- 100 Pugliese, *L'esercito e la cosiddetta marcia*, p. 72.
- 101 On the arrival of the squads from the various assembly points see: ACS, MRF, b. 146, F. Fatti, 'Relazione delle operazioni compiute dalla legione Irpinia durante gli ultimi avvenimenti', Avellino, 7 November 1922; M. Carbone, *Relazione sanitaria durante la marcia su Roma*; relazione della marcia su Roma della 3^a legione fiorentina, 4 November 1922. Chiurco, *Storia della rivoluzione fascista*, pp. 169 and 172–173. See also ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Roma, phonogram arriving from the police of Rome to the Home Office, 30 October 1922, h. 10 pm and telegram from the Prefect of Rome to the Ministry of the Interior, same date, 4 pm.
- 102 PRO, FO 371/7659, report of the army attaché to the Foreign Office, 31 October 1922. On the demonstration see the articles in the main national newspapers on 1 November 1922, bearing in mind that the only newspapers that could be published were Fascist, nationalist or pro-Fascist ones. Almost no sources were found on this in the papers of the Ministry of the Interior.
- 103 ACS, MRF, b. 146, report on the March on Rome by the 3rd Legion of Florence, 4 November 1922.
- 104 See Repaci, *La marcia su Roma*, pp. 567–575; De Felice, *Mussolini il fascista*, pp. 375–387; Lyttelton, *The Seizure of Power*, pp. 95–97.
- 105 Ferraris, *La marcia su Roma*, p. 129.
- 106 Fascist and filo-Fascist newspapers undoubtedly inflated the figures: see 'Centomila camicie nere riconsacrano Roma all'Italia', *La Nazione*, 1 November 1922;

- 'Un concentramento di settantamila uomini per la marcia su Roma', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 1 November 1922.
- 107 See e.g. C. Scarfoglio, 'Salute Italia!', *Il Mattino*, 31 October 1922, and 'Il fascismo al potere', *Cremona Nuova*, 31 October 1922.
- 108 'Insurrezione antiparlamentare', *Il Mattino*, 31 October 1922 and ACS, MRF, b. 146, Al direttorio del fascio napoletano di combattimento, 4 November 1922.
- 109 'Insurrezione antiparlamentare', *Il Mattino*, 31 October 1922.
- 110 Some of these actions had a lethal effect: consider what happened in Andria; in Lugo di Romagna; in Foligno; and also in Cuorné, where a non-Fascist died (Chiurco, *Storia della rivoluzione fascista*, pp. 102; 103; 104; 125).
- 111 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, the commander of the company in Milan to the Ministry of the Interior, 29 October 1922. See also Comando del corpo d'armata di Milano, *Avvenimenti della giornata del 29 ottobre*, 29 October 1922 (*ibid.*) and 'Milano. Mitragliatrici in azione contro i fascisti per una dimostrazione all'*Avanti*. Il vile contegno del giornale pussista. Fascisti feriti', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 31 December 1922. Other attacks against newspapers happened in Modena: see ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Modena, telegram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 1 November 1922. In other areas selling certain newspapers was prohibited: see ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Firenze, telegram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 2 November 1922, h. 6.50 pm and 3 November 1922, h. 12.30.
- 112 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Novara, telegram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 29 October 1922, h. 1. See 'La manovra infernale di Novara. Un morto e tre feriti fascisti', *L'Ardito*, 29 October 1922.
- 113 Del Vita, *La marcia su Roma con le centurie scelte di Arezzo*, p. 43. What contributed to these events was the revocation of the state of siege and the telegrams coming from the government: see Michaelis, *Il generale Pugliese e la difesa di Roma*, p. 278.
- 114 See the telegrams from the head of police in Rome to the Ministry of the Interior, 29 October 1922, h. 10.35 am, 1.15 pm and 1.40 pm in ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106. See also ACS, MI, PS, 1922, fasc. Roma, phonogram from the Prefecture of Rome to the Ministry of the Interior, 29 October 1922, h. 6.50 pm.
- 115 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Roma, phonogram from the police, 29 October 1922.
- 116 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Roma, phonogram from the police to the Ministry of the Interior, 29 October 1922, h. 3.15 pm.
- 117 Pugliese, *Io difendo l'esercito*, pp. 99–100 and 'Uno sanguinoso scontro coi comunisti', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 31 October 1922.
- 118 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Roma, telegram from the head of police in Rome to the Ministry of the Interior, 29 October 1922, h. 5 pm.
- 119 The account of this episode offered by Pugliese, *Io difendo l'esercito*, pp. 96–98 is partially different, since in trying to praise the pacifying role of the army, he underestimated the number of victims.
- 120 Fondazione Feltrinelli, Fondo Tasca, 'Angelo Tasca opere varie, situazione italiana', b. 1, fasc. 72 'Note varie manoscritte 1919–1924'.
- 121 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Roma, police di Roma, 'Notiziario dalle ore 10 del 31 ottobre alle ore 6,30 del 1° novembre', pp. 2–3.
- 122 See ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, the police in Roma, 'Notiziario dalle ore 6.30 del 1° novembre 1922 alle ore 6.30 del 2°'.
- 123 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Roma, the police in Roma, 'Notiziario dalle ore 10 del 31 ottobre alle ore 6,30 del 1° novembre' pp. 2–3.
- 124 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, fasc. Roma, the police in Roma, 'Notiziario del 1° novembre dalle ore 8,30 alle ore 11,30 e Notiziario dalle ore 6,30 del 1° novembre alle ore 6,30 del 2°'.

- 125 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, fasc. Bari, telegram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 31 October 1922, h. 3 and 31 October 1922, h. 9.30 pm. On this episode see also S. Colarizi, *Dopoguerra e fascismo in Puglia (1919–1926)*, Bari, Laterza, 1971, p. 227.
- 126 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, fasc. Torino, telegram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 31 October 1922, h. 5 pm. A different interpretation is given by Chiurco in *Storia della rivoluzione fascista*, p. 123.
- 127 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, fasc. Torino, telegram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 1 November 1922, h. 2.15 pm.
- 128 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Venezia, telegram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 1 November 1922.
- 129 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, fasc. Brescia, telegram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 30 October 1922, h. 6.30 pm. On Brescia see A.A. Kelikian, *Town and Country under Fascism: The Transformation of Brescia 1915–1926*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1986, in particular pp. 158–159. See also Chiurco, *Storia della rivoluzione fascista*, pp. 44–45 and ACS, MI, PS, 1922, fasc. Brescia, telegram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 31 October 1922, h. 7.45 pm and telegram from General Barco to the Ministry of the Interior, 4 November 1922, h. 6.40 pm.
- 130 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Verona, telegram from the commander in chief to the Ministry of the Interior, 30 October 1922.
- 131 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Venezia, telegram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 3 November 1922, h. 1.25 pm.
- 132 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Venezia, telegram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 3 November 1922, h. 1.25 pm.
- 133 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Catania, telegram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 2 November 1922, h. 5.15 pm.
- 134 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Caserta, telegram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 3 November 1922, h. 7.50 pm.
- 135 Previous attempt to occupy the city were reported in ‘Il tentativo fascista contro Civitavecchia. Testa di ponte per l’avanzata su Roma? Il fermo contegno del proletariato’, *L’Avanti!*, 25 August 1922; ‘I fascisti di nuovo all’assalto di Civitavecchia’, *L’Avanti!*, 13 October 1922.
- 136 Chiurco, *Storia della rivoluzione fascista*, pp. 161–165. Italics are used in the original text. On the actions during the March see ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Roma, phonogram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 29 October 1922, h. 6.50 pm.
- 137 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Siracusa, telegram from the person acting as vice-Mayor in Carlentini to the Ministry of the Interior, 4 November 1922. Similar cases happened in Lentini, in the province of Syracuse, in Catanzaro and in Carmignano in the province of Teramo.
- 138 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Siracusa, telegram from the Prefect to the Ministry of the Interior, 5 November 1922, h. 12.25.
- 139 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Modena, telegram from the Prefect of Modena to the Ministry of the Interior, 1 November 1922.
- 140 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Modena, telegram from Aldo Finzi to MP Vicini, 2 November 1922.
- 141 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Modena, telegram from the Prefect to the Home Office, 3 and 6 November 1922. Another act of violence against the editor-in-chief of the newspaper happened in Bergamo in the same days: see ‘Il direttore del «Giornale» di Bergamo percosso e ferito’, *Il Corriere della Sera*, 1° November 1922.
- 142 The only account I found of this is Farinacci, *Squadristismo*, pp. 183–185
- 143 L’ordine di smobilitazione. Un proclama del Quadrumvirato’, *Il Popolo d’Italia*, 31 October 1922.

- 144 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Roma, the police in Rome, 'Notiziario dalle ore 10 del 31 novembre alle ore 6,30 del 1° novembre'. In his first Cabinet address, on 1 November, Mussolini declared that there were almost no Fascists in Rome: see ACS, Verbali del Consiglio dei Ministri, volume dal 2 agosto 1921 al 13 ottobre 1923, consiglio del 1° novembre 1922. Nonetheless, there was a contradiction in the following meeting, where he reported that the situation in the city had not been normalised yet: see *ibid.*, 8 November 1922.
- 145 Ferraris, *La marcia su Roma*, p. 135.
- 146 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, b. 106, fasc. Roma, the police in Rome, 'Notiziario dalle 6 antimeridiane del 2 novembre alle ore 7 del 3' and phonogram from the police in Rome, 4 November 1922, h. 10.15. See also 'Lo sgombrò fascista ultimato a Roma', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 3 November 1922.
- 147 Chiurco, *Storia della rivoluzione fascista*, p. 219.
- 148 Farinacci, *Squadristismo*, pp. 185–188. On the *squadristi* leaving Rome see 'I fascisti iniziano la smobilitazione. Le 'camicie nere' reduci da Roma arriveranno oggi', *La Nazione*, 1 November 1922.
- 149 ACS, MI, PS, 1922, fasc. Roma, phonogram from the police in Rome, 2 November 1922, h. 1.10 pm. On the demobilisation of the squads see 'La smobilitazione fascista', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 2 November 1922; 'L'esodo degli squadristi da Roma', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 2 November 1922; 'Lo sgombrò fascista ultimato a Roma', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 3 November 1922.
- 150 The British embassy told the Foreign Office that the *squadristi* weren't giving back the arms they had stolen during the march: see PRO, FO 371/7659, Graham to the Foreign Office, 1 November 1922.
- 151 The first to underline this aspect was Tasca in his *Nascita e avvento del fascismo*, p. 442.
- 152 Balbo's account is quite contradictory: see Balbo, *Diario 1922*, p. 197.
- 153 Chiurco, *Storia della rivoluzione fascista*, p. 20 and ACS, MRF, b. 146, 'Piano di mobilitazione per la Marcia dell'Intendente Generale Ernesto Civelli'.
- 154 See the analysis in Santomassimo, *La marcia su Roma*, p. 74. The figures are approximate as the sources are neither precise nor completely reliable.
- 155 Balbo, *Diario 1922*, p. 96.
- 156 See e.g. Tasca, *Nascita e avvento del fascismo*, p. 458 and Silone, *Il fascismo*, pp. 140–141.
- 157 ACS, Minutes of the Cabinet, 2 August 1921 – 13 October 1923.
- 158 Roberto Balzani has underlined the fact that historians have overlooked this element: see 'Le tradizioni amministrative locali', in R. Finzi (ed.), *Storia d'Italia. Le Regioni dall'Unità ad oggi. L'Emilia Romagna*, Turin, Einaudi, 1997, pp. 599–646.
- 159 Lyttelton, *The Seizure of Power*, p. 90.

Chapter 5

- 1 B. Mussolini, *Scritti e discorsi. L'inizio della nuova politica (28 ottobre 1922–31 dicembre 1923)*, Milan, Hoepli, 1934, p. 8.
- 2 'Ancora le violenze contro la libertà di stampa', *Il Corriere d'Italia*, 4 November 1922.
- 3 *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 2 November 1922 and 5 November 1922. See also 'La libertà di stampa e la risposta di Mussolini a Barzilai', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 2 November 1922; 'La risposta dell'on. Mussolini al telegramma dell'on. Barzilai', *Il Mondo*, 2 November 1922.
- 4 'Ancora violenze contro la libertà di stampa', *Il Corriere d'Italia*, 4 November 1922. The suspension of the publication of the newspaper was announced in 'Per la patria', *Il Corriere d'Italia*, 31 October 1922.
- 5 G. Bottai, 'A proposito della libertà di stampa', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 12 November 1922.

- 6 'Restaurazione costituzionale e nazionale', *L'Idea Nazionale*, 1 November 1922.
- 7 Timone, 'La «nostra» rivoluzione', *L'Esercito Italiano*, 31 October 1922. On this article see G. Rochat, *L'esercito italiano da Vittorio Veneto a Mussolini, (1919–1925)*, Bari, Laterza, 1967, p. 407 and Botti, Ilari, *Il pensiero militare italiano dal primo al secondo dopoguerra (1919–1943)*, Rome, Stato Maggiore dell'Esercito, 1985, p. 279.
- 8 Rochat, *L'esercito italiano*, p. 399.
- 9 Timone, 'La “nostra” rivoluzione’.
- 10 'Al di fuori e al di sopra!', *L'Esercito Italiano*, 7 November 1922.
- 11 E. Sailer, 'Le due misure di Mussolini', *L'Esercito Italiano*, 17 November 1922.
- 12 'Ottimamente!', *L'Esercito Italiano*, 3 November 1922.
- 13 'Una pagina di storia italiana', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 1 November 1922. Even though the *Corriere* staunchly opposed this censorship, the newspaper nonetheless tried to express a less vocal opposition vis-à-vis the new government and the possibility that it might normalise the country: see 'In attesa', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 2 November 1922; 'Verso la normalità', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 10 November 1922.
- 14 Gentile, *Storia del partito fascista*, p. 670.
- 15 L. Russo, 'Conversazioni con Benedetto Croce', in Russo, *Il dialogo dei popoli*, Florence, Il sentiero, 1953, pp. 329–330.
- 16 B. Croce, *Lettere a Giovanni Gentile*, ed. by A. Croce, Milan, Mondadori, 1981, pp. 621–622, letter no. 925, 3 November 1922. On the reactions to Gentile's appointment, see G. Turi, *Giovanni Gentile. Una biografia*, Florence, Giunti, 1995, pp. 304–311.
- 17 G. Fortunato, *Carteggio 1912–22*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 1979, p. 416.
- 18 Fortunato, *Carteggio*, p. 416.
- 19 Fortunato, *Carteggio*, pp. 416–417. On this, see also P. Zunino, *Interpretazione e memoria del fascismo. Gli anni del regime* (1991), Rome-Bari, Laterza, 2000, p. 8, and pp. 67–68.
- 20 Many Popolari, though, continued to harbour reservations about the government: see e.g. the letter addressed by Giuseppe Meda to Luigi Sturzo on 30 October 1922 in G. De Rosa, *Storia del Partito popolare*, p. 302.
- 21 G. Gentile, F. Pintor, *Carteggio*, Florence, Le Lettere, 1993, pp. 310–311, letter of 3 November 1922.
- 22 ACS, Archivio Nitti, b. 84, fasc. 132/c 'Saverio Bonomo', letter of Saverio Bonomo to Nitti, 11 November 1922.
- 23 F. Barbagallo, *Francesco Saverio Nitti*, Turin, UTET, 1984, pp. 458–462.
- 24 See 'Continuando la nostra strada', *L'Avanti!*, 14 November 1922.
- 25 Nonetheless the position of the Communists seems quite contradictory: see A. Agosti, *Palmiro Togliatti*, Turin, UTET, 1996, p. 44; A. Agosti, *La terza internazionale. Storia documentaria*, Rome, Editori Riuniti, 1974, vol. 1 (1919–1923), t. 2, pp. 615–617 and P. Togliatti, *Sul fascismo*, ed. by G. Vacca, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 2004.
- 26 A., 'Nei nostri confini!', *Battaglie sindacali*, 7 November 1922.
- 27 'La confederazione del lavoro contro una manovra comunista', *La Stampa*, 31 October 1922. See also Spriano, *Storia del partito comunista italiano*, I, pp. 232–233.
- 28 R. Rigola, 'Il diritto di vivere', *La Giustizia*, 10 November 1922. On Rigola see C. Cartiglia, *Rinaldo Rigola e il sindacalismo riformista in Italia*, Milan, Feltrinelli, 1976, and S. Merli, 'Corporativismo fascista e illusioni riformistiche nei primi anni del regime. L'attività dell'A.N.S. Problemi del lavoro nelle carte di Rinaldo Rigola', *Rivista storica del socialismo*, 1959.
- 29 P. Nenni, 'Una pagina di storia', *L'Avanti!*, 14 November 1922.
- 30 See A. Berselli, *L'opinione pubblica inglese e l'avvento del fascismo (1919–1925)*, Milan, Franco Angeli, 1971.

- 31 ACS, Carte Schanzer, sc. 14, Sforza (Paris) to Schanzer, 28 October 1922, h. 5.45 pm; Trassati (Berlin) to Schanzer, 28 October 1922, h. 2.20; Garroni (Constantinople) to Schanzer, 28 October 1922, h. 9 pm; Rosso (Washington) to Schanzer, 30 October 1922, h. 8.30; Summonte (Beograd), 30 October 1922, h. 9 pm. See also R. Paris, *L'Italia fuori dall'Italia*, in *Storia d'Italia. IV. Dall'Unità ad oggi*, tomo I, Turin, Einaudi, 1975, pp. 664–670.
- 32 ACS, Carte Schanzer, sc. 14, telegram from Schanzer to all the embassies, no date, no time given.
- 33 ACS, Carte Schanzer, sc. 14, Schanzer to all the embassies, 29 October 1922, h. 1.15, and the telegram from Rosso (Washington) to Schanzer, 30 October 1922.
- 34 Cfr. ACS, Carte Schanzer, sc. 14, telegram from Sforza (Paris) to Schanzer, 30 October 1922, h. 8.30 pm; *ibid.*, Summonte (Belgrade), 30 October 1922, h. 9 pm.
- 35 PRO, FO 395/373, McClure to Koppel, press review, 10 November 1922, ff. 137–143 (see this document also for the following quotations).
- 36 See G. Prezzolini, *Diario 1900–41*, Milan, Rusconi, 1978, p. 373 (31 October 1922) and Albertini, *Epistolario*, pp. 1646–1647.
- 37 PRO, FO 395/373, McClure to Koppel, press review, 10 November 1922, ff. 137–143. See also PRO, FO 395/373, ff. 146–153, Report by Mr. Harvey on his visit in Milan and Turin to Mr Koppel (to Mr. Scott), 13 December 1922.
- 38 PRO, FO 371/7660, report of Dormer to the Foreign Office, 31 October 1922, ff. 166–167, see also Ragionieri, *Italia giudicata*, II, pp. 511–516.
- 39 PRO, FO 371/7659, Graham to the Foreign Office, 28 October 1922, h. 3.10 pm, ff. 77–78.
- 40 PRO, FO 371/7659, Graham to the Foreign Office, 29 October 1922, h. 4 am, ff. 84–85.
- 41 PRO, FO 371/7659, Graham to the Foreign Office, 29 October 1922, 11 am, f. 88.
- 42 Berselli, *L'opinione pubblica inglese*, pp. 79–99.
- 43 E. Fasano Guarini, 'Il Times di fronte al fascismo (1919–1932)', *Rivista storica del socialismo*, nos. 25–26, 1965, esp. pp. 165–169.
- 44 PRO, FO 371/7659, Hardinge (Paris) to Curzon, 30 October 1922, f. 109.
- 45 Cfr. ACS, Carte Schanzer, sc. 14, letter of Sforza (Paris) to Schanzer, 28 October 1922, h. 5.45 pm. Frassati resigned too when Mussolini came into power.
- 46 W.I. Shorrock, *From Ally to Enemy. The Enigma of Fascist Italy in French Diplomacy, 1920–1940*, The Kent State University Press, 1988, esp. pp. 23–24.
- 47 R. Schor, 'La Marche sur Rome et la prise du pouvoir par Mussolini vues par l'ambassade de France', in E. Decleva, P. Milza (ed.), *La Francia e l'Italia negli anni Venti: tra politica e cultura*, Milan, Ispi-Spai, Milano 1996, esp. p. 44.
- 48 Charles-Roux to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, 31 October 1922, in Schor, 'La Marche sur Rome', p. 47.
- 49 J. Mesnil, 'La bougeoisie à l'abri du fascisme', *Humanité*, 31 October 1922.
- 50 P. Milza, *L'Italie fasciste devant l'opinion française 1920–1940*, Paris, Armand Colin, 1967, pp. 54–76.
- 51 Schmitz, *The United States and Fascist Italy*, p. 52.
- 52 *Ibid.*, pp. 36–59. The attitudes of the American press toward the March on Rome are now analysed in detail in M. Canali, *La scoperta dell'Italia. Il fascismo raccontato dai corrispondenti americani*, Venice, Marsilio, 2017, pp. 57–110.
- 53 R. Quartararo, *I rapporti italo-americani durante il fascismo (1922–1941)*, Napoli, Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1991, pp. 19–21.
- 54 See Mussolini's telegram to the British Home Office, 1 November 1922 and the one by Lord Curzon to Mussolini in PRO, FO 371/7673. On this see also 'I telegrammi di Mussolini ai capi di governo alleati', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 1 November 1922.
- 55 Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Rapports commerciaux et politiques, Europe 1918–1929, Italie, 13, Télégramme de l'Ambassade de France au Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, 16 novembre 1922.

- 56 Mussolini, *Scritti e discorsi. L'inizio della nuova politica*, p. 7 and p. 9.
- 57 The interpretation and discussion about the March on Rome as a revolution or the negation of this possibility were present in the first parliamentary debates after the March and were to continue from this moment onward. As an example of these debates, see Salvemini, *Scritti sul fascismo*, Milan, Feltrinelli 1963, pp. 611–612.
- 58 I started to develop this hypothesis in 'Dire violenza, fare violenza. Espressione, minaccia, occultamento e pratica della violenza durante la marcia su Roma', *Memoria e Ricerca*, no. 13, 2003, pp. 51–68. On these aspects see also the Introduction to S. Falasca Zamponi, *Fascist Spectacle: The Aesthetics of power in Mussolini's Italy*, Berkeley-Los Angeles-London, University of California Press, 1997.
- 59 Mussolini to the Senate, 16 November 1922, APS, XXVI legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. IV, p. 3999.
- 60 On the political uses of this reform see A. Aquarone, *L'organizzazione dello Stato totalitario*, Turin, Einaudi, 1995 [1965], pp. 1–14. On the full decision-making powers, see Volt, 'Per la pienezza dei poteri', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 22 November 1922; M. Maraviglia, 'Salus republicae...', *L'Idea Nazionale*, 15 November 1922; 'Pieni poteri', *L'Idea Nazionale*, 24 November 1922; 'L'uso dei pieni poteri', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 26 November 1922; 'Pieni poteri', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 1 December 1922. These first parliamentary debates after the March are briefly analysed also in Lyttelton, *The Seizure of Power*, pp. 99–101.
- 61 D. Musiedlak, *Lo stato fascista e la sua classe politica, 1922–1943*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2003, p. 295. On the lack of any Parliamentary reaction to Mussolini's speech see also M. Pernot, *L'expérience italienne*, Paris, Politeia, 1924, p. 234.
- 62 Salvemini, *Memorie e soliloqui*, pp. 80–81.
- 63 APC, XXVI legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. IX, 16 November 1922, p. 8.401. Diego Murgia was a member of the Democrazia Liberale group: see *I 535 deputati al Parlamento per la XXVI legislatura*, Milan, Treves, 1922, p. 533.
- 64 APC, XXVI legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. IX, 16 November 1922, p. 8.405.
- 65 Ibid., p. 8.404.
- 66 Ibid., p. 8.444.
- 67 Ibid., p. 8.443.
- 68 Ibid., p. 8.452.
- 69 Ibid., p. 8.453.
- 70 Ibid., p. 8.454.
- 71 Ibid., p. 8.405–8.406.
- 72 Ibid., p. 8.406.
- 73 Ibid., p. 8.408.
- 74 Ibid., p. 8.409. See also Aquarone, *L'organizzazione dello Stato totalitario*, in the note on p. 26.
- 75 APC, XXVI legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. IX, 17 November 1922, p. 8.410.
- 76 Ibid., pp. 8.460–8.462.
- 77 APC, XXVI legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. IX, 16 November 1922, p. 8.395.
- 78 Ibid., p. 8.396.
- 79 Ibid., p. 8.397.
- 80 Ibid., p. 8.423.
- 81 Both quotations can be found in APC, XXVI legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. IX, 17 November 1922, pp. 8.423–8.424.
- 82 Ibid., p. 8.436.
- 83 Ibid., p. 8.446.
- 84 Ibid., p. 8.422.
- 85 Ibid., p. 8.427.
- 86 Both quotations come from: *ibid.*, p. 8.429.
- 87 Ibid., p. 8.432.
- 88 Ibid., p. 8.450.

- 89 Ibid.
- 90 Ibid., p. 8.421. Lazzari took a similar stance: see *ibid.*, p. 8.445.
- 91 APC, XXVI legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. IX, tornata del 16 November 1922, p. 8.410.
- 92 Ibid., p. 8.411.
- 93 Ibid., p. 8.450.
- 94 APC, XXVI legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. IX, 16 November 1922, p. 8.423.
- 95 APC, XXVI legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. IX, 17 November 1922, pp. 8.435–8.436.
- 96 Ibid., p. 8.427.
- 97 Musiedlak, *Lo stato fascista*, pp. 295–299.
- 98 APS, XXVI legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. IV, pp. 4.213–4.217.
- 99 Ibid., p. 4.240.
- 100 Ibid., p. 4.245.
- 101 Ibid., p. 4.253.
- 102 Ibid., pp. 4.261–4.264.
- 103 F.S. Nitti, *Scritti politici. Vol. XVI. Articoli e discorsi. Inediti vari, documenti*, 1, Bari, Laterza, 1979, p. 128 and Nitti, *Scritti politici. Vol. XVI. Articoli e discorsi inediti. Documenti*, 2, Bari, Laterza, 1980, p. 466. The biographical context of these choices is clarified by Barbagallo, Nitti, p. 462.
- 104 See the speech delivered in Parliament on the electoral law by the leader of the squads of Trieste, Francesco Giunta, in the next chapter.
- 105 See Anna Kuliscioff's letter to Turati, 15 November 1922, in Turati, Kuliscioff, *Carteggio V. 1919–1922. Dopoguerra e fascismo (1953)*, Turin, Einaudi, 1977, p. 899. The references to post-October 1922 Italy as a dictatorship spread in the anti-Fascist world in those months: see e.g. APC, XXVI legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. IV; F. Turati, A. Kuliscioff, *Carteggio VI. 1923–1925. Il delitto Matteotti e l'Aventino*, Turin, Einaudi, 1977; Salvemini, *Memorie e soliloqui*, esp. pp. 52–53; Albertini, *Epistolario 1911–1926*.
- 106 A comment on this is to be found in Anna Kuliscioff's letter, 17 November 1922, in Turati, Kuliscioff, *Carteggio V*, p. 902. Interesting references to the matter are also provided by Albertini, *I giorni di un liberale 1907–1923*, Bologna, Il Mulino 2000, pp. 401–402.
- 107 Albertini, *I giorni di un liberale*, p. 401.
- 108 S. Accame, *Gaetano De Sanctis fra cultura e politica. Esperienze di militanti cattolici a Torino 1919–1929*, Florence, La Nuova Italia, 1975, p. 120 (the letter was written on 17 November 1922).
- 109 Accame, *Gaetano De Sanctis*, p. 120.
- 110 *Il diario di Salandra*, ed. by G.B. Gifuni, Milan, Pan editrice, 1969, p. 265.
- 111 Anna Kuliscioff's letter to Turati, 17 November 1922, in Turati, Kuliscioff, *Carteggio V*, p. 902.
- 112 A. Salandra, *Memorie politiche 1916–1925*, Milan, Garzanti, 1951, p. 32.
- 113 Z. Zini, *La tragedia del proletariato in Italia. Diario 1914–1926*, Milan, Feltrinelli, 1973, p. 190. Italics my own.
- 114 'Un discorso dittatoriale', *La Giustizia*, 17 November 1922; 'Forma e sostanza', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 17 November 1922; 'Modus moriendi', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 19 November 1922; 'La riapertura del Parlamento in regime di dittatura', *La Stampa*, 16 November 1922; 'Aria greve', *La Stampa*, 19 November 1922.
- 115 T., 'Il discorso dell'onorevole Mussolini', *L'Osservatore romano*, 17 November 1922.
- 116 'Un discorso e un voto', *Il Corriere d'Italia*, 18 November 1922.
- 117 Much the same opinion was voiced by other nationalist or pro-Fascist conservative newspapers: see e.g. the opinion of the *Sentinella delle Alpi* in E. Mana, *La professione del deputato. Tancredi Galimberti fra Cuneo e Roma (1856–1939)*, Treviso, Pagus, 1992, p. 368.

- 118 M. Meraviglia, 'Novus Ordo', *L'Idea Nazionale*, 18 November 1922. Already on 1 November 1922 *Idea Nazionale* greeted the new government and the Roman demonstration in an article entitled 'Restituzione costituzionale e nazionale'.
- 119 It also seems as though one of the meetings in preparation of the March was held in Torre Pellice, because the Fascists could rely on the fact that Diaz was near, even though he did not participate in the event, and could be contacted: see F. Fucci, *Emilio De Bono. Il maresciallo fucilato*, Milan, Mursia, 1989, p. 65.
- 120 Rochat, *L'esercito italiano*, p. 407.
- 121 On the «memorie storiche» see P. Bertinara, 'L'ufficio storico dello stato maggiore dell'esercito', in *Le fonti per la storia militare italiana in età contemporanea. Atti del III seminario. Roma, 16–17 dicembre 1988*, Rome, Ministero per i Beni culturali. Ufficio centrale per i beni archivistici, 1993, pp. 35–36.
- 122 ASSME, A1, b. 020, Comando del corpo d'armata di Verona, *Memoria storica del 1922*. For other similar examples see *ibid.*, b. 021, Comando della divisione militare territoriale di Bologna, *Memoria storica del 1922*; *ibid.*, b. 022, Comando della divisione militare territoriale di Firenze, *Memoria storica del 1922*; and *ibid.*, b. 027, Comando della brigata Como, *Memoria storica del 1922*.
- 123 ASSME, A1, b. 018, Comando del corpo d'armata di Bologna, *Memoria storica del 1922*. In this case too other similar examples may be found: *ibid.*, b. 024, Comando della 7^a divisione militare di fanteria, di stanza a Trento, *Memoria storica del 1922*; *ibid.*, b. 029, Comando della brigata Parma, di stanza a Mantova, *Memoria storica del 1922*; and *ibid.*, Comando della brigata Alpi di stanza a Perugia, *Memoria storica del 1922*.
- 124 ASSME, A1, b. 019, Comando del corpo d'armata di Roma, *Memoria storica del 1922*.
- 125 ASSME, A1, b. 022, Comando della divisione militare territoriale di Firenze, *Memoria storica del 1922*; *ibid.*, b. 033, Comando della Brigata Arezzo; *ibid.*, b. 044, Comando dei carabinieri reali della legione di Genova, *Memoria storica del 1922*.
- 126 ASSME, A1, b. 026, Comando della brigata granatieri di Sardegna, *Memoria storica del 1922*; *ibid.*, b. 029, Comando della brigata Parma di stanza a Mantova, *Memoria storica del 1922*; *ibid.*, b. 066, 18^o Reggimento di fanteria, *Memoria storica del 1922*.
- 127 See ASSME, A1, b. 033, Comando della brigata Sassari di stanza a Trieste, *Memoria storica del 1922*.
- 128 ASSME, A1, b. 018, Comando del corpo d'armata di Verona, *Memoria storica del 1922*.
- 129 ASSME, A1, b. 021, Comando della divisione militare territoriale di Bologna, *Memoria storica del 1922*; *ibid.*, b. 023, Comando della divisione militare di fanteria di Bari, *Memoria storica del 1922*; *ibid.*, b. 045, Comando dei carabinieri reali della legione di Treviso, *Memoria storica del 1922*.
- 130 ASSME, A1, b. 033, Comando della brigata Avellino di stanza a Bolzano, *Memoria storica del 1922*.
- 131 Particularly revealing are the memoirs by the Carabinieri of Genova in ASSME, A1, b. 043, Comando dei carabinieri reali di Genova, *Memoria storica del 1922*.
- 132 ASSME, A1, b. 033, Comando della brigata Arezzo, *Memoria storica del 1922*.
- 133 However, one of the most important studies on Fascist propaganda from the beginning of the regime does not even mention this case: see P.V. Cannistraro, *La fabbrica del consenso. Fascismo e mass media*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 1975, esp. pp. 11–12.
- 134 'Fasti e nefasti del cinematografo', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 10 November 1922. See also: G. Brunetta, *Storia del cinema italiano*, 1, Rome, Editori Riuniti, 1993, p. 324.
- 135 M. Isnenghi, 'La marcia su Roma'.
- 136 Salvemini commented the film in *Memorie e soliloqui*, 12 December 1922, p. 104.

Chapter 6

- 1 This is the title of a volume written by Socialist MP Giacomo Matteotti, who was murdered by Fascist squads in June 1924: see G. Matteotti, *Scritti sul fascismo*, ed. by S. Caretti, Pisa, Nistri-Lischi, 1983.
- 2 On the Popolari's short participation in Mussolini's government see G. De Rosa, *L'avvento del fascismo*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 1987, esp. pp. 5–45; De Rosa, *Storia del Partito popolare*, pp. 299–310; N. Antonetti, *Sturzo, i popolari e le riforme istituzionali del primo dopoguerra*, Brescia, Morcelliana, 1988. For a more recent analysis of the role of Catholics and Popolari at the origins of Fascism, see: L. Ceci, *L'interesse superiore. Il Vaticano e l'Italia di Mussolini*, Rome-Bari, Laterza 2016 e A. Guasco, *Cattolici e fascisti. La Santa Sede e la politica italiana all'alba del regime (1919–1925)*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2016.
- 3 Similar interpretations are put forward in S. Trentin, *Dallo statuto albertino al regime fascista* (1929), Padua, Marsilio, 1983; L. Carlassare, 'La 'rivoluzione' fascista e l'ordinamento statutario'. Recently also Emilio Gentile supported this idea in *E fu subito regime*.
- 4 'Forza e consenso', *Gerarchia*, March 1923. The previous quotation comes from 'Tempo secondo', *Gerarchia*, January 1923. Both articles are now in B. Mussolini, *Scritti e discorsi. La rivoluzione fascista (23 marzo 1919–28 ottobre 1922)*, Milan, Hoepli, 1934, pp. 77–79 and 43–44.
- 5 B. Buozzi, V. Nitti, *Fascismo e sindacalismo*, Padua, Marsilio, p. 102, affirmed that there were at least 166 victims. On Fascist violence after the March see the documents present in ACS, Gabinetto Finzi, bb. 1–13, and Matteotti, *Un anno di dominazione fascista*, pp. 167–253.
- 6 See R. De Felice, 'I fatti di Torino del dicembre 1922', *Studi Storici*, IV, no. 1, 1963, pp. 51–122; A. Sonnessa, 'The 1922 Turin Massacre (Strage di Torino): Working Class Resistance and Conflicts within Fascism', *Modern Italy*, X, n. 2, November 2005, pp. 187–205.
- 7 The British consul expressed no condemnation of this abuse, but only criticised the Socialist administration in PRO, FO 371/7673, Lampson to the Foreign Office, 28 December 1922, and the official report of 13 December 1922. See also Matteotti, *Un anno di dominazione fascista*, p. 175. No reference to these acts of violence is to be found in the article 'Milano vittoriosa', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 12 December 1922.
- 8 'La giornata elettorale', *L'Avanti!*, 12 December 1922.
- 9 De Felice emphasised the role of violence as a political means among the Fascists in *Mussolini il fascista. La conquista del potere*. Since then, however, various interpretations have contributed to affirming the importance of violence as a means of consolidation of Fascist power: see M. Canali, 'Repressione e consenso nell'esperimento fascista', in E. Gentile, *Modernità totalitaria. Il fascismo italiano*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, pp. 56–81; M. Millan, *Squadrisimo e squadristi nella dittatura fascista*, Rome, Viella, 2014. Some interesting pages have been written by Salvatore Lupo on this: see S. Lupo, *Il fascismo*, pp. 154–166.
- 10 'L'avvenire dello "squadrisimo" secondo l'on. Finzi', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 11 November 1922.
- 11 A. Lanzillo, 'Esame dei nuovi compiti', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 10 November 1922.
- 12 'Dopo il Gran Consiglio Fascista. Gli scopi e il significato della Milizia per la Sicurezza Nazionale', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 17 December 1922. See also 'Il carattere del Gran Consiglio fascista e la milizia per la sicurezza nazionale', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 17 December 1922; 'La Milizia per la Sicurezza Nazionale', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 20 December 1922; 'L'organizzazione della milizia fascista deliberata dal Consiglio dei Ministri', *Cremona Nuova*, 29 December 1922; 'La "milizia

- nazionale' e i corpi di polizia nelle decisioni del Consiglio dei Ministri', *L'Idea Nazionale*, 30 December 1922.
- 13 Meanwhile the PNF decreed the dissolution of the action squads and of the other political groups was established: see Aquarone, *L'organizzazione dello Stato totalitario*, p. 19; De Felice, *Mussolini il fascista. La conquista del potere*, pp. 431–438. On the Milizia see also De Felice, *Mussolini il fascista. La conquista del potere* cit., pp. 431–438 and M. Canali, 'Milizia volontaria per la sicurezza volontaria (MVSN)', in V. De Grazia, S. Luzzatto (eds), *Dizionario del fascismo*, Torino, Einaudi, 2003, *ad vocem*. See also Millan, *Squadrisimo e squadristi*, in particular pp. 19–46.
 - 14 'Il Re ha firmato il Decreto per la costituzione della milizia nazionale', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 16 January 1923; 'Il decreto per la costituzione della Milizia Nazionale firmato dal Re', *La Nazione*, 16 January 1923.
 - 15 L. Donati, 'La guardia regia', *Storia contemporanea*, no. 3, settembre 1977, pp. 441–487. Now see also L. Madrignani, *La Guardia Regia. La polizia italiana nell'avvento del fascismo (1919–1922)*, Milan, Unicopli, 2014.
 - 16 Already Silvio Trentin and Gaetano Salvemini emphasised this aspect: see Trentin, *Dallo statuto albertino al regime fascista*, and G. Salvemini, *Le origini del fascismo in Italia. Lezioni di Harvard*, pp. 395–396.
 - 17 Donati, *La guardia regia*, pp. 481–484.
 - 18 ACS, MI, Gabinetto Finzi, b. 1, fasc. 8, Emilio De Bono to the Prefects, 5 January 1923. On Milan see also 'I fascisti in servizio di P.S.', *L'Avanti!*, 5 January 1923.
 - 19 "'Camicie nere" e "Sempre pronti"', *La Stampa*, 23 December 1922; 'La trasformazione dello squadrisimo. E i "sempre pronti"?'', *La Stampa*, 29 December 1922.
 - 20 'Lo scioglimento dei "Sempre pronti" e la fusione tra fascismo e nazionalismo', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 3 January 1923. See also F. Gaeta, *Il nazionalismo italiano*, Bari, Laterza, 1981, pp. 239–251 and De Felice, *Mussolini il fascista. La conquista del potere*, p. 434.
 - 21 De Felice, *Mussolini il fascista. La conquista del potere*, pp. 431–438.
 - 22 'La nuova milizia', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 30 December 1922.
 - 23 'Orientamenti di posizione', *La Stampa*, 22 December 1922.
 - 24 Missiroli to Prezzolini, Milan 22 December 1922, in M. Missiroli, G. Prezzolini, *Carteggio 1906–1974*, Rome, Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1992, p. 275.
 - 25 APC, XXVI legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. XI, pp. 9375–9392.
 - 26 S. Trentin, *Dallo statuto albertino al regime fascista*, but also C. Pellizzi, *Fascismo-aristocrazia*, Milan, La Grafica Moderna, 1925, p. 135. This is also the view expressed by Aquarone, *L'organizzazione dello Stato totalitario*, p. 21.
 - 27 See Misuri's speech, 29 May 1923, in APC, XXVI legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. X, pp. 9.467–9.468. A view favourable to the preservation of the Militia as a transitional solution was expressed by A. Pirelli, *Taccuini 1922/1943*, ed. by D. Barbone, Bologna: Il Mulino, 1984, p. 46.
 - 28 De Felice, *Mussolini il fascista. La conquista del potere*, n. 1, p. 395.
 - 29 Carlo Cassola to Giovanni Amendola, 26 February 1923 in Kühn Amendola, *Vita con Giovanni Amendola*, pp. 488–490. On the Fascist inroads in Southern Italy see Lupo, *Il fascismo*, pp. 166–180.
 - 30 'I reati politici e militari contemplati dal decreto di amnistia', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 24 December 1922; 'L'amnistia. Il suo carattere politico', *La Stampa*, 24 December 1922; 'L'amnistia di Natale', *L'Idea Nazionale*, 24 December 1922; 'La promulgazione del Decreto d'amnistia del nuovo Governo. "Ulteriore suggello alla pacificazione del Paese, per le maggiori fortune della Patria"', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 24 December 1922. More studies on the amnesty are needed. Now see also: Millan, *Squadrisimo e squadristi*, pp. 20–31.
 - 31 M. Govi, 'Il riordinamento costituzionale dello stato', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 1 December 1922. See also Govi, 'Due discorsi', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 19 November 1922.

- 32 See the articles devoted to this issue in leading newspapers, such as *Popolo d'Italia*, *Corriere della Sera*, *Idea Nazionale*, *Nazione*, *Epoca* and *Giornale d'Italia* in November 1922.
- 33 See Aquarone, *L'organizzazione dello Stato totalitario*, pp. 15–17; De Felice, *Mussolini il fascista. La conquista del potere*, pp. 417–419, and M. Di Napoli, 'Gran Consiglio del Fascismo', in De Grazia, Luzzatto (eds), *Dizionario del fascismo, ad vocem*.
- 34 Aquarone, *L'organizzazione dello Stato totalitario*, p. 16.
- 35 Pirelli, *Taccuini*, p. 46.
- 36 APC, XXVI legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. X, p. 9.465. This speech gave some hope to the anti-Fascists, as is shown by the letter which Anna Kuliscioff addressed to Turati on 30 May 1923: see F. Turati and A. Kuliscioff, *Carteggio V. 1919–1922. Dopoguerra e fascismo* (1953), Turin, Einaudi, 1977, pp. 44–45.
- 37 Aquarone, *L'organizzazione dello Stato totalitario*, pp. 36–37.
- 38 See for example: 'La riforma elettorale per decreto reale?', *L'Idea Nazionale*, 15 December 1922.
- 39 See Aquarone, *L'organizzazione dello Stato totalitario*, pp. 36–37; De Felice, *Mussolini il rivoluzionario*, pp. 518–525; Lyttelton, *The Seizure of Power*, pp. 121–135; G. De Rosa, *Il partito popolare italiano*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 1988, pp. 187–213; M.S. Piretti, *Le elezioni politiche in Italia dal 1848 ad oggi*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 1995, pp. 248–287; G. Sabbatucci, 'Il "suicidio" della classe dirigente liberale. La legge Acerbo 1923–1924', pp. 57–80; D. Musiedlak, *Lo stato fascista*, pp. 310–311.
- 40 See the letters written by Anna Kuliscioff in this period in Turati, Kuliscioff, *Carteggio VI*, p. 68, 93, 97 and 101. The quotation is at p. 102.
- 41 L. Albertini, *I giorni di un liberale 1907–1923*, p. 407.
- 42 Piretti, *Le elezioni politiche*, p. 273; De Rosa, *Il partito popolare italiano*, pp. 197–205.
- 43 Salvemini, *Memorie e soliloqui*, p. 54.
- 44 See the speech given by Labriola on 11 July 1923, in APC, XXVI legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. XI, p. 10475.
- 45 APC, XXVI legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. XI, p. 10417.
- 46 See the speech of Giovanni Amendola, 12 July 1923, in APC, XXVI legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. XI, p. 10539.
- 47 See e the speech of G. Alessio, 11 July 1923, *ibid.*, p. 10493. Labriola also denounced the violation of the liberal State: see APC, XXVI legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. XI, p. 10482.
- 48 Threatening speeches were delivered by Terzaghi and Giunta: see APC, XXVI legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. XI, pp. 1051–1053 and p. 10613 ff. These intimidations were denounced in some of the addresses delivered by the opposition: see *ibid.*, pp. 10476 and 10493.
- 49 Sabbatucci, 'Il 'suicidio' della classe dirigente liberale', p. 69. See also A. Visani, *La conquista della maggioranza. Mussolini, il Pnf e le elezioni del 1924*, Genova, Fratelli Frilli Editori, 2004.
- 50 Filippo Turati to Kuliscioff, 11 July 1922, in Turati and Kuliscioff, *Carteggio VI*, pp. 107–108.
- 51 'Minaccia di applicare misure eccezionali e definitive', *L'Avanti!*, 8–9 July 1923.
- 52 APC, XXVI legislatura, *Discussioni*, vol. XI, p. 10534.
- 53 Acerbo's speech was delivered on 14 July 1923: *ibid.*, p. 10624.
- 54 See, as an example, the speech by Alessio, 11 July 1923: *ibid.*, p. 10500.
- 55 *Ibid.*, pp. 10490–10491.
- 56 Salandra, *Memorie politiche*, p. 40.
- 57 Zini, *La tragedia del proletariato*, p. 204. Cf. Sabbatucci, 'Il 'suicidio' della classe dirigente liberale', p. 57, who uses this expression with reference to Calamandrei.

- 58 Turati and Kuliscioff, *Carteggio VI*, pp. 130–131.
- 59 'Sforzo di definizione', *L'Avanti!*, 17 July 1923. See also 'Un bivio', *L'Avanti!*, 22–23 July 1923; 'I distinguo di Gino Baldesi', *L'Avanti!*, 24 July 1923.
- 60 Almost no reference to this is provided in 20th-century studies about the CGdL: see A. Pepe, *Il sindacato nell'Italia del '900*, Soveria Mannelli, Rubettino, 1996; A. Pepe, O. Bianchi, P. Neglie, *La CGdL e lo Stato autoritario*, Rome, Ediesse, 1999. Some references can be found in C. Cartiglia, *Rinaldo Rigola e il sindacalismo riformista in Italia*, Milan, Feltrinelli, 1976. The question is given more attention in De Felice, *Mussolini il fascista. La conquista del potere*, and in F. Cordova, *Le origini dei sindacati fascisti*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 1974, pp. 107–110; 116–118; 168–179.
- 61 A., 'Indipendenza confederale', *Battaglie sindacali*, 23 November 1922. D'Aragona position was approved by the national board of the CGdL, the 17–20 November 1922, cfr. *La Confederazione Generale del Lavoro negli atti, nei documenti, nei congressi 1906–1926*, ed. by Luciana Marchetti, Milan, Edizioni Avanti!, 1962.
- 62 See Cordova, *Le origini dei sindacati fascisti*, pp. 107–110; 116–118; 168–179. See too among those articles in favour of collaboration: 'Unità sindacale', *L'Ardito*, 14 December 1922; 'Le trattative per l'unità proletaria', *Il Giornale d'Italia*, 8 December 1922; 'Il trucco dell'unità sindacale', *Il Giornale d'Italia*, 14 dicembre 1922; 'Nulla di straordinario sotto il sole? A proposito di Parlamento Corporativo', *Cremona Nuova*, 24 November 1922; R. Farinacci, 'La tattica degli avversari e il nostro atteggiamento', *Cremona Nuova*, 7 December 1922; 'Il colloquio Mussolini-Baldesi e alcune fantasie romane', *La Nazione*, 5 December 1922; 'I rapporti tra Governo e proletariato in un forte discorso di Mussolini a Milano', *La Nazione*, 7 December 1922; 'Il fallimento dei nuovi tentativi social-collaborazionisti', *La Nazione*, 8 December 1922; 'I nuovi orientamenti sindacali e il problema dell'unità', *Il Mondo*, 30 November 1922; 'Il fronte unico operaio nel pensiero dell'onorevole Baldesi', *Il Mondo*, 2 December 1922; 'Collaborazionismo e sindacalismo integrale', *Il Mondo*, 1 May 1923.
- 63 See 'Un'intervista con l'onorevole D'Aragona', *Il Mondo*, 22 November 1922.
- 64 See B. Buoizzi, *Scritti dell'esilio*, Rome, Opere Nuove, 1958, p. 26.
- 65 De Felice, *Mussolini il fascista. La conquista del potere*, pp. 591–618.
- 66 The minutes of the meeting are in Marchetti, *La Confederazione Generale del Lavoro*, pp. 370–372. See also A., 'Una linea', *Battaglie sindacali*, 26 July 1923. The issue of collaboration with the government was a hot topic in July 1923: 'Le trattative per la collaborazione nel campo sindacale', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 27 July 1923; 'Le basi di un accordo per l'organizzazione operaia precisate in un colloquio con l'onorevole D'Aragona. E Le riserve dei socialisti unitari e degli organizzatori', *Il Corriere della Sera*, 27 July 1923; 'I distinguo di Gino Baldesi', *L'Avanti!*, 24 July 1923; 'Sindacati operai e partito socialista', *L'Avanti!*, 26 July 1923.
- 67 A., 'Sindacato vigilato?', *Battaglie sindacali*, 20 September 1923; A., 'La morte civile', *Battaglie sindacali*, 4 October 1923.
- 68 Turati suggests this in his letter to Kuliscioff of 11 July 1923, in Turati and Kuliscioff, *Carteggio VI*, pp. 108–109, and 111, 116. The decree was commented on in the Fascist world: 'Verso la censura?', *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 6 December 1922 and 'La libertà di stampa. Diritti e doveri', *Cremona Nuova*, 8 December 1922.
- 69 Aquarone, *L'organizzazione dello Stato totalitario*, p. 40.
- 70 Turati and Kuliscioff, *Carteggio VI*, p. 113.
- 71 Graham to Curzon, 14 December 1922, in PRO, FO 371/7673.
- 72 'La fine del Secolo', *L'Avanti!*, 15 July 1923.
- 73 Turati and Kuliscioff, *Carteggio VI*, p. 149. On these changes affecting those newspapers which prior to the rise of Fascism had supported the liberal leader Francesco Saverio Nitti, see F. Barbagallo, *Francesco Saverio Nitti*, Turin, UTET, 1984, p. 463.

- 74 L. Albertini, *Epistolario 1911–1926*, III, *Il dopoguerra*, Milan, Mondadori, 1968, pp. 1724–1731, 1732–1745 and 1760–1766.
- 75 ‘La nostra collaborazione’, *Il Corriere della Sera*, 10 January 1923. A response from the *Popolo d’Italia* came with a.m., ‘Il Governo fascista e il «Corriere»’, *Il Popolo d’Italia*, 11 January 1923.
- 76 ‘Le nuove disposizioni sulla stampa’, *Il Corriere della Sera*, 14 July 1923. See also ‘Imminenti provvedimenti per la disciplina della stampa al consiglio dei ministri e I provvedimenti sulla stampa’, *Il Corriere della Sera*, 12 July 1923; ‘Le norme vincolatrici per la stampa approvate dal Consiglio dei ministri’, *Il Corriere della Sera*, 13 July 1924; ‘Il regolamento della stampa e le impressioni dei giornali’, *Il Corriere della Sera*, 15 July 1923; ‘Sulla stampa’, *Il Corriere della Sera*, 25 July 1923; T. Bruno, ‘Per la libertà di stampa’, *Battaglie sindacali*, 26 July 1923.
- 77 ‘La libertà della stampa’, *L’Avanti!*, 11 July 1923. See also ‘Il bavaglio per la stampa’, *L’Avanti!*, 12 July 1923.
- 78 B. Mussolini, ‘I principi del governo e la situazione politica internazionale. Riassunto intervista concessa a Roma all’inviato speciale di «Echo de Paris», André Pironneau’, 4 October 1922 in Mussolini, *Opera Omnia* (1923–24), E. and D. Susmel (eds), Florence, La Fenice, 1951–1963, XX, (for this and the following two quotations).
- 79 On the first anniversary of the March see E. Gentile, *Il culto del Littorio: la sacralizzazione della politica nell’Italia fascista*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 1993.
- 80 *Le celebrazioni della marcia su Roma*, *Il Corriere della Sera*, 30 October 1923; *La marcia su Roma*, *La Scure*, 28 October 1923.
- 81 B. Mussolini, ‘Al popolo di Torino’, 24 ottobre 1923, in Mussolini, *Opera Omnia*, p. 50.
- 82 B. Mussolini, ‘Al gran rapporto della Milizia’, Roma, Augusteo 1° febbraio 1924, in Mussolini, *Opera Omnia*, p. 175.
- 83 B. Mussolini, ‘Cinque anni dopo San Sepolcro’, Roma, 23 marzo 1924, in Mussolini, *Opera Omnia*, pp. 206–207.
- 84 A. Rocco, ‘La formazione della coscienza nazionale dal liberalismo al fascismo. Discorso pronunciato il 5 aprile 1924 (Roma, Augusteo)’, in A. Rocco, *Scritti e discorsi politici. II. La lotta contro la reazione antinazionale (1919–1924)*, Milan, Giuffrè, 1938, p. 755.
- 85 See the speech by R. Farinacci, 3 June 1924, in APC, XXVII legislatura, *Discussioni*, I, p. 110. The same day, in response to Giovanni Amendola, Farinacci said: «we were wrong not to shoot you» (Ivi, p. 199).
- 86 G. Matteotti, ‘Dopo un anno di dominazione fascista’, *Critica Sociale*, XXXIV, no. 1, 1–15 January 1924, pp. 5–7.
- 87 ‘Contributo alla commemorazione della marcia su Roma. «Noi, no»’, *L’Avanti!*, 28–29 October 1923.

Conclusion

- 1 D.F. Schmitz, *The United States and Fascist Italy, 1922–40*, Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1998, pp. 52–53. On this see also Canali, *La scoperta dell’Italia*, p. 101.
- 2 On the impact of Fascism abroad, see R. Paris, *L’Italia fuori dall’Italia*, in *Storia d’Italia. IV. Dall’Unità ad oggi*, vol. I, Turin, Einaudi, 1975, pp. 664–670; A. Berselli, *L’opinione pubblica inglese e l’avvento del fascismo*; R. Schor, ‘La Marche sur Rome et la prise du pouvoir par Mussolini vues par l’ambassade de France’; H. Woller, *Roma, 28 ottobre 1922*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1999; B. Goyet, ‘La “Marche sur Rome”’: version originale sous-titrée. La réception du fascisme en France dans les années 20’, in M. Dobry (ed.), *Le mythe de l’allergie française du fascisme*, Paris, Albin Michel, 2003, pp. 69–105; M. Pelouille, *Positionnement politique en temps de crise. Sur la réception du fascisme italien en France*, Uzès, Inclinaison, 2015; Ch. Poupault, *À l’ombre des faisceaux: les voyages français dans l’Italie des chemises*

noires, 1922–1943, École française de Rome, 2014; C. Goeschel, ‘Italia docet? The Relationship between Italian Fascism and Nazism Revisited’, *European History Quarterly*, vol. 3, no. 42, 2012; Canali, *La scoperta dell’Italia*; and my own research *Dittature mediterranee. Sovversioni fasciste e colpi di Stato in Italia, Spagna e Portogallo*. In recent years the global dimension of Fascism has increasingly become a focus of interest, although Italy always risks vanishing from the picture.

- 3 Some of these reflections were already presented in my essay ‘Una marcia, tante marce’, in Andrea Giardina (ed.), *Storia mondiale dell’Italia*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 2018, pp. 602–605.
- 4 Critical works on the impact of Fascism in Europe in the 1920s include Woller, *Roma, 28 ottobre 1922*, p. 65, and E. Gentile, *Fascismo. Storia e interpretazione*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 2002, p. 35, even though Woller’s research pushes towards a greater consideration of the impact of Fascism in Europe.
- 5 L. de Caprariis, ‘Fascism for Export? The Rise and Eclipse of the Fasci italiani all’estero’, *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 2, no. 35, 2000, pp. 151–183.
- 6 Woller, *Roma, 28 ottobre 1922*, pp. 100–106.
- 7 Over the last few years there has been some consensus on the fact that the most important phase of European post-war stabilisation lasted until 1923 – see Gerwarth, *The Vanquished*. It seems to me that in a wider European perspective this stabilisation should be considered to have been in the making at least until 1925–1926; on this see Maier, *Recasting Bourgeois Europe*, in particular chapter VIII.