

ABSTRACT PRIN 2017

A Private History of Italian Film Criticism: Public Roles and Private Relations. The Institutionalization of Film Criticism in Italy from the 1930s to the 1970s

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The research project *A Private History of Italian Film Criticism: Public Roles and Private Relations: The Institutionalization of Film Criticism in Italy from the 1930s to the 1970s* was conducted by the universities of Bologna, Parma, and Udine. The overall objective was to understand and make accessible to a specialized audience, as well as to film lovers and cinephiles, the history of Italian film criticism and its cycles of institutionalization through private and oral sources. Whenever possible, these sources were not only studied but also retrieved, cataloged and reproduced to allow broader availability to other scholars.

Participants in this project included Michele Guerra (PI until July 2022), Jennifer Malvezzi, Sara Martin, and Marco Zilioli for the University of Parma; Paolo Noto (PI from July 2022), Michael Guarneri, Stella Scabelli, and Giulio Tosi for the University of Bologna; and Andrea Mariani, Maria Ida Bernabei, Simone Dotto, Enrico Gheller, and Sara Tongiani from the University of Udine. The research benefited from the interest and collaboration of institutional archives such as the Biblioteca "Renzo Renzi" at the Cineteca di

Bologna, the Biblioteca Statale Isontina and Mediateca Provinciale "Ugo Casiraghi" in Gorizia, as well as private archives from the heirs of prominent critics Umberto Barbaro and Lorenzo Pellizzari.

The central research question concerned the characteristics and role of film criticism during a significant period from the 1930s to the 1970s. To address this question, the researchers chose to complement sources typically employed in the intellectual history of criticism (magazines, articles, volumes produced by critics), by investigating materials usually overlooked such as letters, photographs, ephemera, editorial and working materials, and interviews. The focus on relationships, professional routines, and interpretive communities aimed to uncover aspects such as the role of women, intellectuals, and cultural operators in constructing and managing professional networks, the drive towards internationalization, and the complex system of relationships with other political and cultural institutions.

This process led to focus particularly on the following archives:

- Fondo "Guido Aristarco" at the Cineteca di Bologna, where researchers contributed to reorganizing, updating, and requalifying over 780 files. These files include correspondence, work materials, notes for university teaching, and editorial documents from the magazine "Cinema Nuovo". The most relevant materials (over 2000 documents) have been scanned.

- Fondo "Mino Doletti" at the Cineteca di Bologna, where the inventory and description of the collection have been commenced. A portion of the documents, particularly those related to Paola Ojetti's contribution to the creation and management of the journal "Film", has been digitized.

- Fondo "Lorenzo Pellizzari" (private), where approximately 500 letters written to or received by film critics or cultural operators, as well as work documents related to the journal "Cinema e cinema" (1974-1993), have been digitized.

- Fondo "Ugo Casiraghi" at the Biblioteca Statale Isontina and Mediateca Provinciale in Gorizia, where the description of the 147 files has been completed and the correspondence with Jusik Achrafian (Glauco Viazzi) has been reconstructed and fully transcribed.

- Fondo "Umberto Barbaro" (private), where private and non-inventoried correspondence between Umberto Barbaro and art historian Roberto Longhi has been digitized.

Among the primary outcomes of the research

are the volumes and collections edited by Maria Ida Bernabei and Andrea Mariani, *Attorno al film. La corrispondenza e le sceneggiature inedite di Caravaggio e Carpaccio*, Enrico Gheller and Sara Tongiani, *Album Casiraghi. Parole e immagini di un critico cinematografico*, Jennifer Malvezzi and Marco Zilioli, *Cinquant'anni di corrispondenza. Il cinema di Lorenzo Pellizzari*, Andrea Mariani and Simone Dotto, *Ugo Casiraghi, Glauco Viazzi. Il cervello di Carné. Letterario 1941-1943*, Marco Zilioli, *Pagine rosse. Cinema, politica e stampa comunista (1945-1960)*.

Malvezzi, Mariani, and Noto also edited a special issue of *Cinergie* titled *Repositioning Film Criticism. Critical Displacements among the Film Critics from 1930 to 1970: Space, Connections, Movements* available as open access, <https://doi.org/10.6092/issn.2280-9481/v12-n23-2023>.

Interviews were conducted with critics and witnesses of the cultural and intellectual period studied during the research. Based on these interviews, a documentary titled *Come la vita* was produced. The complete interviews, along with the edited documentary and the digitized materials, organized according to four thematic paths devised by the researchers (professionalization, internationalization, gender relationships, institutions), but also the online catalogs of the studied archives the will be made available through the website <http://archividellacritica.cinetecadibologna.it>.