

## Summaries

Federica Muzzarelli, *Stardom and photography. Cléo de Mérode, the first fashion icon*

This essay focuses on the contribution that early photography had in planning one of the most characteristic phenomena of contemporary visual and popular culture: the rise of the star. Thanks to photography, stardom has become a true global, democratic and popular experience, attracted by the sublimated possession of bodies, but also by their fanatic adoration and devotion. In particular, the role of the French dancer Cléo de Mérode (1875-1966), as the first mass icon of the contemporaneity in the photographic era, will be explored.

*Keywords:* photography, mass icon, Cléo de Mérode, celebrity culture, pop culture

Stephen Gundle, *“English Rose” for the masses: Gladys Cooper, beauty ideals and popular visual culture in early twentieth-century Britain*

This article examines the role of postcards in turning the stage actress Gladys Cooper into a popular idol in early twentieth-century Britain. Between the 1910s and the end of the 1920s, vast numbers of postcards featuring her image were sold, sent by mail and sometimes collected. She became the ideal Englishwoman of the period whose physical beauty and calm demeanour were widely admired. The article explores the Gladys Cooper phenomenon in terms of aesthetics, social class, gender norms and material culture. It is shown that she never became a passive commodity. She was an astute businesswoman who oversaw the exploitation of her beauty. She also countered the isolation of the icon by bringing her family into her postcard imagery. The final sections consider the letters that fans wrote to her in her heyday and the role of postcard collecting in ensuring her longevity in the affections of her most devoted admirers.

*Keywords:* English rose, actress postcards, Gladys Cooper, feminine beauty, fan culture, postcard collecting

Giorgio Bertellini, *Picturesque Italianness in Early Hollywood: The case of film star George Beban*

In this essay I examine the film career of American-born actor, George Beban, one of the most celebrated star character actors you never heard of. A specialist of in the representation of Italian immigrants from 1915 to 1926, Beban was the first one to interpret the roles of Italian characters as protagonists of feature-length films. In the essay I identify both the novelty of his cinema and its links to the urban and all-American development of a much older aesthetic form, that of picturesque. Taming the racialized otherness of the Italian immigrant in heartbreaking stories of tragic loss and fatalism allowed Beban to train American audience to entertain emotional sympathy for these Latin foreigners, which in a few years prepared the way for the experience of a different kind of emotional contiguity, that related to star Rudolph Valentino.

*Keywords:* Italian immigrants, early Hollywood, picturesque, racial melodrama, stardom

Myriam Juan, *“A true fairy tale”*: *Annie Vernay or the making of a star in the French cinema of the late 1930s*

This article examines the career of Annie Vernay (1921-1941), a shooting star of French cinema who made her debut at the age of 15, became a star at 16 and died at 19 on a liner heading for California. It analyses the way her launch reveals the importation of the Hollywood star system and its methods in France in the late 1930s. It questions the model embodied by this good-girl, who was fashioned to compete with American stars in a country torn between its attachment to the past and a desire for modernity. Finally, it examines the way Annie Vernay herself experienced what the press presented in its time as “a true fairy tale”.

*Keywords:* Annie Vernay, stardom, cinema, France, Hollywood, 1930s

Barbara Montesi, *Looking for Shirley Temple? Cinema, celebrity culture and childhood in fascist Italy*

Even in fascist Italy, the smiling Shirley Temple becomes a celebrity. Exalted for her peculiarities, the child becomes a target when compared with what should be an Italian star. Responding to militarized childhood

and ready for the sacrifice of the regime, seriousness is the characteristic that must distinguish the Italian baby actors, whose image becomes public with thoughtful shots and in roles of heroes or victims. Some boys achieve notoriety in parts that respond to the fascist myth of Balilla, but it is a little girl, Maria Letizia Pascoli, to represent the most accomplished model of a baby star, also embodying an independent, active and smiling childhood and an unprecedented female protagonism.

*Keywords:* fascism, childhood, celebrity culture, visual culture, Shirley Temple, Mariù Pascoli

Mariapaola Pierini, *Who is Signorina Sette? Images of the feminine between entertainment, sex and politics in postwar Italy*

The essay examines the parable of «Sette», a weekly magazine first published on April 1, 1945. The magazine, whose pages are filled with particularly daring photographs and drawings of female bodies, is an expression of the ambiguous and contradictory subterranean movement – perfectly embodied by one of the creators hidden behind the magazine’s pages, Leo Longanesi – that invests the image of women in the immediate postwar period. «Sette» as well as the Signorina that stands out on its covers, are a crossroads where politics, sex, satire, cinema, news, and culture intersect, and not without contradictions.

*Keywords:* postwar Italy, sexuality, women, satire, illustration, periodicals

Azzurra Convertino, *Femicide: representations on the Italian press*

The essay emphasizes the main stereotypes identified in the news coverage of femicide on the Italian press. Furthermore, the article attempts to examine the historical and cultural roots of the stereotypical narrative promoted by the newspapers. The contribution shows the results of a textual analysis carried out on 380 news items published from 2015 to 2019 in two Italian newspapers «La Repubblica» and «Il Tempo». This analysis seeks to show how representation of gender-based violence is discriminatory for women and how hard it is for journalists to rephrase conventional narration for which the article proposes new themes.

*Keywords:* femicide, gender violence, media, newspapers, representation, stereotype

Piergiovanni Genovesi, «*A Lively Feeling of Human Brotherhood*». *The transition from fascism to the Republic in Italy's primary school texts (1945-1957)*

Italy's primary school texts in the aftermath of the Second World War and after the fascist regime are invested by a decisive desire to mark a discontinuity with the recent past and to ensure, in contrast with the belligerent slogans of fascism, «a lively feeling of human brotherhood». However, this process, in the period under examination (1945-1957) encountered various difficulties in deeply scratching the scholastic habit, showing heavy persistence, regarding imagery, words and narrative structures. A situation facilitated by the national and international political context created by the start of the Cold War.

*Keywords:* transitional period, primary school texts, Fascism, Italian Republic, war, peace

Isabella Insolubile, *Allied prisoner of war camps in southern and insular Italy*

Between 1940 and 1943, the South of Italy and its islands hosted 19 camps for Allied prisoners, divided into transit, concentration and labour sites. The living conditions of the enemy soldiers were often difficult, and this was because the Italian detainer was unable to comply with international regulations concerning the protection of prisoners of war. Not only that: in some circumstances, the camp leaders were blatantly hostile towards the men they held, resulting in behaviour that sometimes led to actual war crimes. The experience of Allied imprisonment is thus part of the broad debate on the re-evaluation of the Italians' role in the war.

*Keywords:* prisoner, concentration camps, Southern and Insular Italy, war crimes, Allied, World War II

Matteo Petracci, *Taverns in the decisions delivered by the "Fascist Special Court"*

In the history of the European working-class the taverns became fundamental places for the combination between informal sociability and politization processes. In Italy they had the same purpose too. However, while between the second half of the eighteenth century and the first world

war the political group inside the taverns was totally clear, after the rise of Fascism the taverns provided space for the clandestine group. Throughout a search in the decisions delivered by the “Fascist Special Court”, the author gives some examples, useful to reconstruct the purpose that some taverns had in the activity of conspiracy of anti-fascist groups.

*Keywords:* taverns, antifascism, sociability, aggregation, alcohol, free time