Everyday life in Fascist Italy

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Benito Mussolini's pronouncement in October 1925, willing "everything in the State, nothing outside the State, nothing against the State", three years after the March on Rome had brought his Fascist Party (*Partito Nazionale Fascista*, PNF) to power in Italy, set the stage for a dictatorship that intended to rule Italians 'totally'.[1] To deliver and maintain the Fascist revolution and its promised national regeneration, it would be necessary to permeate and fundamentally re-shape all aspects of Italian society and Italians' daily lives. The pronouncement was made just months after the formal declaration of rule by dictatorship in January 1925, and was accompanied by the disassembling of the apparatus of democracy and civil society including the institution of a one-party-state, rule by decree, and press censorship and the dismantling of trades unions, *Camere del lavoro*, *Case del popolo* and other spaces of non-fascist political sociability.

Crucially, though, the maxim that "everything" must be brought within the purview, and into the service, of the state pointed to 'ordinary' Italians and their everyday worlds as not only key recipients of fascism's 'totalising' project, but also tacitly recognised them as important potential constructors, and the everyday as a key construction site, of the dictatorship. To this end, in the playing out of what we might call the 'actually existing' fascist dictatorship, this was, in addition to being decreed and imposed from above, also enacted 'from below', in the local spaces and everyday practices inhabited and performed day-by-day by the people who lived through it. As they were put into effect, dictatorial policies and rhetoric were (re-)interpreted and potentially modified by representatives and agents of the regime, including local party leaders and members, civil servants, teachers, journalists, health visitors and midwives and so on, in the local spaces and places that effectively comprised the basic 'unit of experience' of the dictatorship. Everyday activities and spaces were not the colourful-but-passive backdrop against which the policies, rituals, and propaganda of fascism were created and lived; rather, it was exactly in quotidian practices and settings – workplaces, leisure and recreational activities, consumer choices and habits, squares, streets and homes, interactions with friends, family, and neighbours – that the dictatorship took shape. These are, therefore, crucial arena in which to examine the encounters, interactions, ideas and practices that constituted the lived experience of Italy's dictatorship.

This chapter explores the everyday, lived experiences of the fascist dictatorship in Italy between 1922 and 1940, from the March on Rome to Italy's entry to the Second World War. Whilst the Fascist regime ruled in Italy until 1943 in southern and central Italy, and until 1945 in northern Italy, this chapter ends in 1940, at the outbreak of the Second World War, in recognition of the substantial changes in lived experience that this wrought. It is guided by a set of key questions: Mussolini's declared aspiration to 'totalitarian' rule notwithstanding, to what extent did the quotidian facets of Italian life genuinely reside "within the state"?; what was the scope of Fascism's totalitarian project, and where were its limits?; how did violence, coercion and intimidation combine with enticement, propaganda and the eliciting of support or 'consent', in the regime's attempts to shape Italians' everyday lives?; and how did Italians themselves variously negotiate, resist, and exploit the dictates of Mussolini's regime?; how and where, if any, did opportunities exist for Italians to act with agency in their everyday

practices? In addressing such questions, the chapter focuses its attention on a select range of venues, practices and interrelations that marked the everyday encounters between 'ordinary' Italians and the regime: the interplay of coercion and persuasion in the state's engagement with Italians; leisure and recreational practices; food consumption; and the intimate and affective networks, interactions and spaces that connected family and friends. All these everyday lived experiences of the fascist dictatorship were themselves conditioned and differentiated by gender, class, race, urban, rural and colonial settings, and other situational and identity-based markers.

The scope of this chapter means that its focus is on the Italian peninsular. That said, it is essential to recognise that lived experiences of Italian fascism did not take place and shape only within its national borders. Many, including the estimated one million Italians – mostly adult men, but also women and children – who, whether as settlers, soldiers, colonial administrators, or opportunists were directly engaged in constructing the Italian empire in East Africa (*Africa Orientale Italiana*, AOI), encountered daily life under the dictatorship outside the metropolitan nation, in Eritrea, Somaliland, Libya, Ethiopia, the Dodecanese islands, or indeed at Italy's edges, as in the case of Istria-Dalmatia and the Alto Adige/Sud Tirol. Of course, the Africans and Europeans unwillingly subjected to Italian imperialist rule experienced the double oppression of fascist dictatorship and colonial governance or occupation. The colonial context also gave rise to particular forms of regime intrusion in everyday life and relations particularly after the Ethiopian War in 1935 motivated the regime to pass increasingly segregationist, racist legislation prohibiting inter-racial cohabitation, marriage, and sexual relations, and denying citizenship and other rights to the many children born of sexual encounters between Ethiopian women and Italian men.[2]

Back on the Italian peninsular, what emerges is a complex and changing picture in which fascism made its presence felt in different aspects of Italians lives at different times and in different and shifting ways. For their own part, Italians moved in and out of the gaze of state authority, nationally and locally. Of course, the dictatorship did interrupt and fundamentally change people's lives, often with violence. However, individuals living under, or through, the fascist regime in Italy did not always feel the impact of the dictatorship uninterruptedly and evenly. They could be variously, or even simultaneously "perpetrators and victims, supporters and detractors, participants and evaders".[3] Inevitably, *in praxis,* it was impossible for the lived reality of everyday life in fascist Italy to meet fully the expectations of Mussolini's totalitarian formula.

Coercion and persuasion

The relationship between the state and the individual in Fascist Italy rested on the interplay of structures, policies and practices intended to elicit consent for dictatorial rule, through belief, indoctrination, propaganda, education, the assurance (albeit often illusory in reality) of welfare provision and the meeting of material desires on the one hand, and, on the other, structures, institutions and forms of compulsion, repression, violence and the removal of alternative forms of organisation, protest and redress. Repression and persuasion went hand in hand, but the connection between the apparatus of repression and structures for building consent was not only one of two faces of fascist policy operating in tandem – one the stick, the other the carrot – to alternately compel and persuade Italians to accept, or at least

acquiesce, to the dictatorship. In actuality, there was significant overlap and interplay between the intention to compel and the intention to persuade within the same regime institutions and structures. For example, many of the institutions and policies established and presented as mechanisms for garnering consent, including those that presented the dictatorship as meeting the population's material needs, like the welfare provision of the *Ente Opera Assistenziale* [EOA] and the *Opera Nazionale Maternità e Infanzia* [ONMI], or indeed as meeting growing mass consumerist wants, as did the *Opera Nazionale Dopolavoro* [OND], also themselves exercised forms of social and political control and carried out functions intended to regulate individual Italians' behaviour and actions, certainly in less violent and overtly threatening ways than the Black-shirted MVSN militias and OVRA secret policemen, but in no less effective ways for that. Thus, whilst the section that follows distinguishes in its discussion between the mechanics of repression and the mechanics of persuasion, it is important to recognise that in practice these institutions and their policies operated in overlapping and mutually-reinforcing ways.

The apparatus of repression in Fascist Italy combined both ostensibly legal or pseudo-legal means with forms of extra-legal violence that functioned, but only technically, outside the state. Fascist authority – and for some its credibility – was sealed both before, during and after the 1922 March on Rome through the violent rampages of the thuggish Black-shirted *squadristi* (after the takeover-of-power corralled into MVSN [Voluntary Militia for National Security] units) who carried out a campaign of political terror that included murder, destruction of homes, printing presses, political organisations and social clubs, torture and ritual humiliations including the infamous forced-ingestion of castor oil as well as trading pitch battles and occupations with political opponents.[4] The consolidation of the dictatorship and its one-party state, usually dated to 1925-6, involved the suppression of the more indiscriminate and "intransigent" elements of *squadrismo* violence,[5] though ultimately Black-shirted political violence continued to resurface at home and, especially, was redirected to the Italian colonies in Libya and East Africa, to Spain in 1936, and, under renewed license, towards perceived domestic enemies marked out by the Racial Laws (from 1938) and outbreak of the Second World War.

In the 'front-line' of what Mussolini termed "surgical violence", that is the selective use of state-sanctioned and institutionalised violence alongside a more widespread climate of repression and fear, were the various branches of the Italian police forces in conjunction with the legal and penal system which together constructed the fascist 'police state' in the second half of the 1920s. Public security guards were reconstituted from 1925 and empowered by legal reforms, notably the 1926 Public Security Law, 1930 Rocco Code and 1931 Public Security Code, to investigate and punish 'public order' and 'political' offenses, including actions, written- or speech-acts newly categorised as criminal, and contained under the umbrella term *sovversivismo* [subversivism]. Alongside investigating 'ordinary' crime, responding to emergencies and calamities, issuing permits and licenses, the Public Security guards were tasked with an increasing remit of 'political policing' roles incorporating identifying and breaking up underground dissident groups, seizing anti-regime material, monitoring foreigners and out-of-towners as well as local Italians deemed potential 'subversives', surveying the correct functioning of party organisations, and preventing and punishing new or reformulated categories of political crime that included, for example, the procuring of abortion.[6]

At the same time, whilst the police forces were formally integrated into the regime and charged with eliminating political disobedience, the degree to which the police were thoroughly 'fascistised' vacillated significantly and ultimately could only ever be partial. Despite a raft of sackings and forced retirements of police officers between 1924 and the end of the decade "on the grounds of professional incompetence or political unreliability" and influxes of committed fascists into the forces in the 1930s, the Interior Ministry police service, including from 1927 the secret police division, OVRA, which ran networks of informants and infiltrated clandestine anti-fascist groups, were led by career policemen and civil servants.[7] In 1925, at the behest of the then Interior Minister, public security police and officials were prohibited from taking up or continuing PNF membership, as were serving *Caribinieri* [military police] officers, or from joining the fascist syndicate for state employees. In 1932, the ban was reversed and party membership made compulsory for all state employees.[8] The incomplete and vacillating harnessing of state police to party interests is reflective of what historian Jonathan Dunnage identifies as the blend of "political sympathies" towards fascism and "career opportunism" that characterised the fascist police from its Chief, Arturo Bocchini, down.[9]

The existing penal system was co-opted and adapted to meet the needs of fascist repression. From 1926, the Law for the Defence of the State created Special Tribunals for the trial of the most serious *sovversivismo* cases against the state, reintroduced the death penalty and allowed for severe prison sentences for certain political crimes. Whilst the death penalty was used by the regime relatively rarely, the gamut of punishments and sanctions ranged a wide spectrum from execution, imprisonment and the use of internment camps, through internal exile [*confino di polizia*], restrictions on movements and employment, police probation [*ammonizione*] and warning [*diffida*]. The agents of fascist repression deployed infiltration, denunciation, intimidation, violence and torture as means of uncovering political crime. Anyone deemed a potential "subversive" could expect to be singled out and directly punished, though the police files of the investigating cases of relatively low-level crimes demonstrate that in addition to being known to have held opposing political views or party membership in the past, holding a certain identity, ethnicity or occupation perceived to lie at Italy's social and racial margins, whether homosexuals, Roma, sex workers, vagrants and alcoholics, would count against the individual and very likely result in harsher punishment.[10]

Because the Fascist Italian regime executed far fewer than, for example, did the Soviet Union, Nazi Germany or Francoist Spain, many have been tempted to understand the regime as a comparatively benign dictatorship. However, measuring a regime's repressiveness – a questionably relativising undertaking in any circumstances – solely in terms of how many of its citizens it killed directly does not fully reflect how violence operates in dictatorial societies and, for example, how the impact of violence-done-to-others and the perception and fear of repression can manifest. Mussolini boasted in 1927 of having significantly increased police numbers and under his rule the prison underwent similar expansion.[11] The number of police arrests, operations against political opponents (reputedly averaging 20,000 per week in 1930), and use of police probation and warnings - Ebner estimates 200,000-300,000 probations were issued - indicates a population under serious surveillance.[12] Torture was deployed to break up clandestine Communist Party (PCI) and liberal *Giustizia e Libertà* groups, sometimes resulting in unexplained deaths.[13] Prison itself could effectively be a death

sentence, as the treatment and ultimate death in custody of Antonio Gramsci, fascism's most famous prisoner, testifies. In all, between the take-over of power, regime persecution, imperialism and war, the Fascist regime is held responsible for around one million deaths.[14] As Paul Corner, Michael Ebner and others have pointed out, the Mussolinian regime need not have been as repressive or as violent as its Spanish, German, or Soviet counterparts for it still to be recognised as a 'police state'.[15]

The elimination of alternative avenues for expressing discontent or seeking redress from the Fascist regime was an integral dimension of the repressive environment. Following the 1924 'Matteotti crisis', when the reformist socialist deputy Giacomo Matteotti was murdered by fascist thugs leading to the subsequent withdrawal from parliament by opposition deputies, Mussolini effectively dismantled the extant political parties, already decimated by *squadrista* violence and regime persecution. Thousands were forced into exile. From January 1926, party headquarters, newspaper and printing presses and offices, and sites of non-PNF political sociability were closed down; in November, a series of 'exceptional decrees' used the cover of an attempt on Mussolini's life to dissolve all non-fascist political parties and to establish the Special Tribunal and increase police powers.[16] By May 1928, the already de facto one-party state was formalised.

Besides the outlawing of political parties, trades union were abolished and replaced by a corporatist system of fascist syndicates, each representing different areas of industry, agriculture and economic labour, Venues and organisations of political sociability – that is, spaces that combined political and social functions, wherein people met to socialise as well as to discuss politics, such as working men's clubs, social and welfare clubs and other liberal associations – were dismantled. The old *Case del popolo* [socialist clubs] were disbanded, and replaced by a striking similar fascistised version in the network of *Case del fascio* that were constructed as local PNF headquarters and community venues criss-crossing Italian neighbourhoods.[17] Even seemingly apolitical organisations like sporting and amateur dramatics associations were dissolved or subsumed into the fascist after-work organisation, the OND. Finally, the regime censorship apparatus, whose agencies tended to also be those entrusted with propaganda, further pointing to the intentional interplay of coercion and persuasion, carried out first by the Press Office and then by the Ministry for Press and Propaganda (in 1937 renamed the Ministry for Popular Culture), sought to control both press and cultural output in Italy, including the regulation of art, music, and cinema.

Via these agencies, structures and policies, the repressive apparatus worked its way through the public and private spheres of ordinary people's everyday lives. While the 'totality' of fascist rule should not be overstated, the perception of widespread surveillance, of a state that gathered information from informants, neighbours, and other local figures such that "it only took the tip off of a passing fascist zealot to get you in a heap of trouble",[18] that imprisoned and meted out violence on those who opposed or disapproved it, and the diminution in alternative spaces and means for expressing and enacting behaviours contrary to the dictatorship all conspired to construct an environment in which dissent, let alone resistance, could seem a very risky prospect indeed.

But the impact of state political violence and climate of repression was manifold and complex. One consequence of the fostering of public cultures of silence and self-censorship for many

was the displacement of behaviours or speech acts critical of, or displeasing to, the regime to more intimate, private and familiar spaces. As such, the dictatorship did not eliminate everyday political expression and non-conformity but rather pushed it to spaces such as bars and private homes, which had long played host to forms of political sociability and continued to do so thanks to perceived increased privacy and intimacy, and, no doubt, to the effects of alcohol consumed therein.[19] At the same time, it's crucial to recognise that for many Italians who were not necessarily card-carrying fascists or regime supporters, the impact of fascist repressive violence was actually positively received. Luisa Passerini, for example, in her seminal oral history study of *Fascism in Popular Memory* among working-class Turinese, noted the frequent appreciation among interviewees for fascism's "keeping order […] discipline and security" as a basis of their "social acceptance" of the regime.[20] More recently, Giulia Albanese demonstrated that the deployment of violence, particularly during the rise of the dictatorship (1919-1926), had "a creative force".[21] The use of violence helped consolidate the regime's position not just by repressing opponents into submission but also through the courting of positive approval for violence directed towards 'others', deemed political, national, or class enemies, which was vital "in forging the political base of Fascism".[22]

The regime's apparatus of persuasion and its functioning were similarly complex. The most prominent of the organisations designed to elicit popular approval and acceptance, whilst simultaneously reshaping Italian men, women and children into the 'new fascist man' and 'new fascist woman' and exerting forms of social surveillance and control, were those run by the single political party, the *Partito Nazionale Fascista* (PNF). The creation of these PNF mass organisations were intended to provide structure, assistance and diversion in Italians' day to day lives. Distinct branches guided Italians through the life course, including the *Fasci* for men, the women's *Fasci femminili* (incorporating from 1933 the *Massaie Rurali* for women from rural labouring families), and for children the various ranks of the *Opera Nazionale Balilla* (ONB) whose divisions for boys and girls aged 6 to adulthood became a model for the German and Spanish dictatorships. Membership of these party organs was not compulsory until 1937 (from 1932 for state employees) but was central to the negotiation of life under dictatorship for Italians of all ages. Party and syndicate membership acted as a gate-keeper, determining access to certain occupations and workplaces, university places and scholarships as well as to potential networks of patronage and support that could benefit one's everyday life such that in the early 1930s the regime leadership embarked on a campaign to eradicate the "superficial careerism" that it believed characterised many Italians – especially young Italians' – decision to join and participate in the PNF's structures and rites.[23]

The regime bodies governing welfare assistance and recreation most readily fulfilled the multivalent functions of simultaneously demonstrating regime benevolence and modern-state competence alongside moulding Italians into fascists. As will be discussed in more detail in the following section, the fascist after-work organisation, the OND, mobilised millions of Italians in its ranks, subsuming pre-existing leisure organisations, and laying on a state-sanctioned portfolio of free or discounted sporting facilities, cinema screenings, touristic activities and folkloric festivals, and facilitating group access to modern recreational technologies including radio-sets, phonographs and sewing machines. In the sphere of social assistance, Mussolini claimed to have created one of the most advanced national welfare systems in Europe. Myriad bodies including the *Ente Opera Assistenziale* (EOA), INFPS [National Fascist Institute for Social Security] and *Opera Nazionale Maternità e Infanzia*

(ONMI) provided social insurance against illness and unemployment, old age pensions, sanatoria, and assistance to pregnant women and mothers. Undoubtedly, such policies were a source of popular approval and contributed to the regime's intended self-projection as bringing the population order, stability and a degree of well-being. At the same time, significant groups of Italians were actively excluded from social assistance provision, including, as Corner points out *braccianti* [landless rural labourers], domestic servants and, after 1938, "persons of non-Aryan race".[24] Fascist health visitors could dispense advice but they also had the authority to withhold benefits and even to separate children from their parents.[25] Thus, the same institutions and functions intended to entice and elicit Italians' acquiescence to fascist rule operated effectively as instruments of social control, keeping detailed records of families and households, imposing fascism's values, and enacting policies of inclusion and exclusion that distinguished between those deemed politically and morally deserving and undeserving.

Finally, the methods through which fascism ruled Italians offered key means for extracting popular support. Firstly, in many respects, fascism presented itself to Italians as a 'political religion', effectively sacralising politics by making the basis of its appeal to the population, and the relationship that bound Italians to the nation and state, one of faith.[26] To this end the regime adopted religious accoutrements, creating a liturgy and a cannon of myths, rituals, martyrs, heroes, feast days and sites of worship, such as the *sacrarie dei caduti* dedicated to those killed in fascism's service, adorned with an eternal flame and the word '*presente*!' on the wall, that were housed in local *case del fascio*, all directed towards soliciting the veneration of the (fascist) state. We might question how far ordinary Italians genuinely believed in and practised the fascist political religion but the evidence suggesting that the regime saw and presented itself as such is compelling.

Secondly, and as part of the fascist political religion, the regime sought to establish a kind of direct connection between Italians and the *Duce* through a cult of personality. Mussolini and those around him carefully and consciously crafted his image and how this was presented to the population.[27] Portraits of the *Duce*, dressed in uniform, were hung in local party headquarters, governmental offices and public buildings, schools, workplaces and even homes, making him appear omnipresent and powerful yet accessible. Photographs of him engaging in sport, or working in fields, often bare-chested to emphasise virility and strength, were published in the country's newspapers and magazines, subjected to meticulous curation by the regime censorship office.[28] The cult of personality presented Mussolini as a benevolent and paternalistic figure, who created jobs (though major public work schemes to drain marsh land and build new cities) at a time of economic depression, cared for the well-being of his subjects and was the guarantor of order and stability, even against the excesses of other regime elements. Letters held in the *Segreteria Particolare del Duce* archive written and sent directly to Mussolini by Italians asking him to intercede personally in difficult individual circumstances, whether a dispute with local officials, personal misery and destitution, or a family member's trouble with the law, in the expectation that Mussolini could and would intervene, suggest that the efforts to present him as the 'father of the nation' resonated with many.[29] There were, though, inevitably limitations to the *Duce* cult. By presenting Mussolini as above, and somewhat removed, from the 'dirty' end of government, his personal popularity often came at the expense of the party, and wider regime. Whilst Mussolini and the regime could exploit this (imagined) division between themselves and the party to build

up popular acquiescence for its rule, it also presented something of a loophole to those ordinary Italians who wished to express dissatisfaction or disapproval of the regime in oblique ways. To this end, the frequent 'if only Mussolini knew' refrain could transmute into "a deliberately confusing combination of loyalty and protest" of the kind that saw protesters in the South make simultaneous declarations of '"Up with Mussolini" and "Down with the Podestà" [fascist mayor]'.[30]

Going out: leisure and 'free time'

Italians' 'free time', in the sense of time spent out of work or school and away from household tasks and other chores, was not spent entirely 'freely'. The fascist regime sought to bring Italians' leisure activities within the purview of the state through the co-opting of pre-existing organisations, groups and private commercial enterprises and the creation of national-fascist *enti* [bodies], institutes and syndicates covering myriad leisure activities from social dancing to tourism to sports. By far the most important and extensive of the state-run and associated bodies established to regulate, shape, and scrutinise free-time and leisure activities was the *Opera Nazionale Dopolavoro* [OND, National After-Work Body]. Established in 1925 as part of the fascist syndicate system and then from 1927 brought under the control of the PNF, the OND replaced or subsumed pre-existing recreational clubs and leisure association within the umbrella of the OND structure. It provided recreational facilities and activities for its members – often free or at low cost – including football, tennis, ski-ing, cinema, amateur dramatics, and day trips to notable Italian cities and other tourist sites on specially commissioned so-called 'popular trains'.[31] These took place in on-site workplace facilities as well as in dedicated provincial and neighbourhood OND centres, many of which had their own bar, radio set and even movie projector.[32]

As an organisation intended principally to shape the free time activities of working and lower-middle class Italians, the OND mobilised huge numbers of men and women: it amassed 1.5 million members by 1929 and 2.75 million by 1936, at which point 20% of industrial labour force and 7% of peasantry were enrolled in its structures.[33] However, crucially, by no means all recreational and leisure structures were drawn into the OND: those remaining outside the fascist organisation included the lay Catholic association, Catholic Action, the Rotary club, private gentleman's clubs, nightclubs, dance halls and working-class bars and taverns.[34] Historians often emphasise the extent to which it was the 'free-time' of blue- and white-collar workers and rural labouring classes that were subjected to the "real political power of the modes of persuasion" and 'consent'-building "by which fascism […] penetrated every domain of social life".[35] Undoubtedly, wealthier middle- and upper-class Italians, with the financial means to fund their leisure activities independently, more often engaged in pastimes and social events organised in and by private commercial entreprises – golf clubs, opera houses, hotel dances and so on - or hosted within social networks by private individuals in their homes.

Nevertheless, whist socio-economic status and class did demarcate different lived experiences both in terms of the types of recreational and leisure activities engaged in and the extent to which these activities were controlled by the fascist dictatorship, it is important not to overstate this distinction. To take the example of social dancing, whilst wealthy Italians attended dances in varied private or commercial venues including the ball rooms and gardens

of luxury hotels, night-clubs and dance halls in the country's capital, industrial centres and fashionable beach resorts, private grand palazzi and more intimate, modest domestic settings, they also attended charitable dances, labelled 'feste del fascio' and 'veglioni tricolori', staged in *case del fascio*, OND centres and other party headquarters that became habitual venues for weekend dancing.[36] At the same time, evidence from contemporary diaries and memoirs demonstrate how frequently couple dancing took place in domestic spaces among working-class and rural labouring Italians, with furniture piled and pushed to the edges of the room and music supplied by a radio transmitting EIAR's 'musica da ballo' or by "a gramophone and a handful of discs".[37] Whilst dancing in private, domestic spaces did not necessarily mean dancing "outside the state", it did mean dancing outside the strictures of the Interior Ministry's dance licensing system, and its associated public security police surveillance. As such, the evidence suggesting that Italians of all classes danced communally in domestic settings placed alongside that demonstrating the regular use of OND centres, *case del fascio* and other regime spaces to host charitable balls – also recognised as prime money-making and propaganda-spinning opportunities – aimed at local political and financial elite clientele, offer a useful qualification to the argument that wealth and socio-economic status facilitated the pursuit of leisure and recreational activities outside state-structures and which therefore better evaded the dictatorship's regulation and consent-building.

As Victoria de Grazia, the foremost historian of the OND, laid bare, fascist after-work policies fit clearly within regime efforts to create and sustain a "culture of consent". The provision of leisure and recreation was conceived as a means of 'improving workers' and rewarding work and productivity – after all, at its 1925 inauguration the OND formed part of the corporatist system of syndicates established for separate trades and professions as supposed mediating bodies between employers and employees – as well as a way of meeting Italians' increasing material and consumer desires collectively, in a way that would help tie the population to the state, to its ideology, and to its leader, Mussolini, writ in benevolent, paternalistic guise. Simultaneously, it aimed to fulfil the flip side of totalitarian-intent rule, that of comprehensive regulation and surveillance, intended as it did to "penetrate […] every domain of social life from industrial entreprise and city neighbourhood to rural village."[38]

Nevertheless, despite the "decisive support" OND structures offered to the fascist regime's efforts to build consensus for its rule, the would-be totalitarian credentials of the OND were somewhat undermined by actuality of its functioning and practice. The OND is best understood as a hodgepodge of local organisations, clubs, societies and recreational halls of which approximately one half pre-dated the fascist accession to power, approximately one sixth were run by private companies for their own employees (and thus only came under umbrella of OND indirectly), and only one third of which were entirely new 'fascist' creations. Because of this, and because also of the multiple political, social and cultural aims it juggled – to garner political consent for fascism, to help maintain social cohesion in the absence of the now dismantled liberal and socialist associations which had previously fulfilled this role, and to fulfil the material desires of the population in an era of rising mass consumption – we follow Victoria de Grazia's suggestion that the OND is most accurately viewed as a mediating institution between state and civil society, one that because of its heterogenous components and the often lack of coherence in the way it operated on the ground, in different regions and localities, was constructed as much 'from below' as it was 'from above'.

Crucially, the ability of the regime to dictate Italians' everyday leisure practices and to use these to shape Italians into fascists was limited also by the important impact of leisure and consumer habits and products from outside Italy and the transnational movement of these, which transferred to Italy from cultural capitals like Paris and Hollywood, and which the regime proved unable to either fully mitigate or harness. The dictatorship struggled to compete with and dislodge especially those leisure pastimes and cultural products considered 'American', and thus the epitome of 'modernity', both in regime and popular imaginaries, from cinematic pictures to jazz and social dancing to cocktail parties. Certainly, it tried. The regime-sponsored creation of a national recording and disc distribution company, Cetra, in 1933 and the forbidding, from 1935, of the transmission of 'music in a Negro character' and 'dance music with choruses sung in English' on the national EIAR (*Ente Italiana per le Audizione Radiofoniche*) radio programmes, and the dismissal of foreign and Jewish Italian musicians from both agencies, were intended to break the perceived hegemony of American music and dance styles, especially those associated with African Americans, to enforce conformity with the regime's imperialist-racist and autarkic projects, and to promote instead the 'Italianisation' of *musica leggera* and its associated dance steps.[39] The growing fashionable cachet of drinking cocktails - 'this strange and insidious drink [that] has come from America to Europe' - in Italy's urban centre-north was denigrated by government officials, Italian wine and beer representatives, and the futurist leader Filippo Marinetti alike as 'horrible poisons' that are 'noxious to our race' and a tell-tale marker of the so-called 'crisis woman', an archetype popularised in the early 1930s by regime propagandists and cultural producers that pinned urban, middle-class, young women who worked outside the home, did not have children, and followed foreign fashions, as unpatriotic shirkers of the reproductive and home-making priorities the regime expected of Italian women.[40]

Above all, Mussolini sought to dislodge American hegemony in the field of cinema. More than any other new cultural technology or recreational pursuit, cinema represented the new opportunities for mass leisure in interwar Europe. Its communication through a visual, and from 1927 spoken, "new vernacular" and combination of an aura of exclusivity and luxury – in part because of the kinds of often unattainable material dream worlds it visualised – with the opportunity to engage with audiences as "individuals within the mass", meant that it was seized by Mussolini as, in his own words, the regime's "most powerful weapon" for transmitting fascist values and ideals.[41] The OND negotiated ticket discounts with commercial cinemas of between 25-35% for most performances and, in the mid 1930s, mobile cinemas brought moving pictures to rural areas at low- or no-cost. Some local OND centres established their own cinemas. However, cinema was also the form of leisure pursuit or consumer commodity that provoked the most angst about perceived 'Americanisation'. American films, largely made in the Hollywood studios, were the US's most financially valuable cultural product in interwar Europe and by the 1930s were only surpassed in terms of circulation by Gillette razor blades and Ford motor cars.[42] Several governmental measures aimed to combat the dominance of Hollywood films. From 1934, a dedicated Directorate for cinema was set up within the Press Office (later morphing into the Ministry for Press and Propaganda and, from 1937, the Ministry for Popular Culture). In 1936 work began on the state-funded *Cinecittà* studio complex on the outskirts of Rome; completed a year later it would churn out half of all the films produced in Italy, amounting to fourteen in 1937, including the directly state-financed *Scipione l'Africano* (1937) whose theme of imperial Roman conquest in Africa matched neatly with contemporary regime priorities in East Africa.[43] In 1938, the Alfieri Law

financially incentivised film producers to create scripts that passed censorship laws and a state monopoly on the distribution of films came into effect, prompting (not entirely intentionally) the previously dominant US distributors and studios to boycott the Italian market.[44]

Undoubtedly, the regime's support for domestic producers and temporary withdrawal of US firms boosted the creation of a homegrown studio and stary system, as cinema-going was only further entrenched as regular recreational activity: ticket sales rose from 348 million per year in 1938 to 477 million in 1982.[45] However, even state-funding for domestic cinematic productions, censorship, and state monopoly on distribution, could not dislodge the primacy of commercial international films, principally emanating from Hollywood. The percentage of Italian-produced films shown after 1935 rose only by approximately 5%, meaning that 80% of films passed by the censors, continued to be foreign, mostly American productions. What's more the increase in Italian films were very often of a genre known as 'white telephone', after the aspirational domestic appliance that served as a cipher for the kind of modern, glamourous, materialistic lifestyles depicted in these sentimental comedies. These were Italian copy-cat versions of American-style films, which effectively aped and validated the '"modern" and cosmopolitan lifestyles' that they presented as 'seductively plausible'.[46] Even in the case of films like *Il Signor Max* (1937), which intended to contrast negatively Hollywood-style material desires with more modest social and cultural aspirations and lifestyles met by fascism through the OND, Italian cinema-goers' recollections of watching such films, which often focussed the more glamorous scenes depicting stylish apartments, fashionable clothes and conspicuous forms of leisure and consumption, revealed the potential gap between regime propagandistic intentions and the actual reception of these.

Eating in the dictatorship: policies and practices of food consumption

Fascist food policy was characterised above all by the principles of autarky, with the aim, as historian Carol Helstosky put it, of bringing about 'alimentary sovereignty' or complete national self-sufficiency in food.[47] Even before the March on Rome (1922), squads of fascist blackshirts patrolled local high streets to police the price and provenance of the staple goods on sale; once in power, from the mid-1920s, the regime moved to bring shopkeepers into *the Confederazione Fascista dei Commercianti Italiani* [Fascist Confederation of Italian Merchants] and introduced measures to "discipline commerce", including maximum prices on key goods, temporary shop closures, state-run co-operatives and a licensing system for all retailers, casting the Fascist state as the "protect[or of] consumers from retailers".[48] Gaining pace through the 1930s, the national-fascist drive for autarky made patriotic consumption and frugality a national duty, especially for women as the assumed controllers of family consumption. Autarky and national self-sufficiency in food were imperatives intricately connected to the regime's imperial and demographic expansion plans: a healthy, virile and sizeable population was essential both to justify colonial expansion and to bring it into being, through war. The conquering of an empire in North and East Africa was further imagined and presented as a means to achieve 'alimentary sovereignty' with the colonised lands in Libya and *Africa Orientale Italiana* (Eritrea, Somaliland and, from 1935-6, Ethiopia) envisaged as fertile lands simply awaiting effective cultivation, where the food provisions needed for an expanding empire would be grown. At home, land reclamation schemes – described as a form

of internal colonisation – converted marshland into arable farmland to be cultivated by Italian families relocated from elsewhere on the peninsular.

The autarky project sought both to control agricultural production and to shape and restrict consumption through multiple means including production quotas, price regulation and propaganda campaigns. In keeping with its associated foreign policy aims, autarky policies directed at controlling production were couched in military terms, as 'battles' such as 'Battle for Grain' inaugurated in 1925 to increase national wheat production and end reliance on imported grain, or were styled as folkloristic harvest festivals, in line with the regime's lauding of rural life as authentically Italian, and therefore, fascist. From 1928, celebratory days – or even weeks – were added to the regime calendar dedicated to certain foods the regime wished to promote: the festival of bread, festival of the grape and the national day of rice.

The regime's propaganda campaigns promoting autarky were ramped up with the invasion of Ethiopia in October 1935 and subsequent imposition of economic sanctions on Italy by the League of Nations from the November. The decreeing of sanctions against Italy was seized as an ideal propaganda tool to mobilise Italians to the 'home front' both in support of the colonial war and in support of the regime's autarky drive at home. The anti-sanctions 'resistance' campaign which sprang up in Italian localities in the forms of resistance committees, though heavily encouraged and managed by the centre, directly addressing Italian consumers, now reshaped as 'consumer-combatants'.[49] Italians were instructed variously (and sometimes contradictorily) to buy and eat local or national produce only, to consume home-grown produce where possible, to be parsimonious and frugal, and often to reduce overall food consumption. The state research institution, the *Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche* (CNR) shored up the regime's autarkic line with scientific legitimacy, publishing reports that determined the autarkic line – less meat, less variety, and lower consumption in general – better suited to the Italian 'race' and advising that Italian workers engaged in moderate labour needed only 2,500 calories per day, far fewer than contemporary recommendations in other nations.[50] For their part, shopkeepers were instructed to remove foreign foodstuff from their shop and local 'price vigilance committees' patrolled stores and market stalls to ensure that merchants were following the maximum price regulations on bread, milk, cheese, eggs and other basic foodstuff and other restrictions such as those enforcing the closure of butchers shops on Tuesdays and the sale (and consumption) of beef, pork, and lamb on Wednesdays. Both shopkeepers and (female) consumers found their selling and shopping practices recast as "patriotic duty"; to infringe the price and other restrictions or to sell or consume foods not considered 'national products' was to act treacherously.[51]

The consumer-focussed campaigns were principally aimed at women and at the middle and upper classes: women as the assumed members of the household responsible for the purchasing and preparing of food for the family and the middle- and upper-classes as those whose means and tastes made them – it was believed – more likely to eat unpatriotically, foreign and/or luxury foods. Telling workers and labourers to eat locally produced foodstuff, reduce meat consumption, and to grow their own where possible was largely moot to a sector of the population whose diet already consisted largely in bread, vegetables, polenta, rice or pasta and little meat, and which, in the words of one boy from Marghera, son of a factory worker, "never set eyes" on a "piece of steak".[52]

Cookbooks and other domestic economy literature, such as the monthly magazine, *La Cucina Italiana*, and even 'autarkic cookery' training courses run by *Comitati Provinciali Femminili per la Resistenza Contro l'Assedio Economico* [Women's Provincial Committees for Resisting the Economic Siege] advised Italian housewives how to budget carefully and encouraged them to make vegetables and fruit the mainstay of family meals.[53] They offered suggestions for ways of substituting meat and its protein, for example with "meat broth" or by serving "a plate of polenta or pasta, garnished with cheese and butter and served with a glass of milk", or ways of stretching meat in meals, for example by serving "la polpa" [meatloaf], thereby treading a careful line between regime-sanctioned assertions downplaying the nutritional value of meat and tacitly recognising how meat consumption operated as a marker of socio-economic status.[54]

The impact of the autarky project was very significant, and largely negative. Whilst the 'Battle for grain' succeeded in reducing wheat imports to Italy, from an average 22.2 quintals per year in 1922-8 to 4.7 million quintals in 1937, this left the country unable to profit from the lower international price of wheat due to the combination of an international surplus in wheat and favourable exchange rates. Meanwhile, domestic wheat yields only met the annual national target twice and increased yields varied considerably between regions.[55] Ultimately, less wheat was available to Italian consumers in the 1930s, and what was available was more expensive.[56] Moreover, the giving over of more farmland to grain cultivation came at the expense of other, more appropriate and potentially more profitable (because exportable), crops including citrus fruits and olives, which in turn led to less diversity in the foodstuffs available to Italians.[57]

Accordingly, what Italians consumed changed, especially from the 1930s. Individual capita consumption of wheat, maize, tomatoes, greens, dried legumes, fresh fruit, dried fruit, most meats, most fats and oils, sugar, coffee, wine, beer and spirits all decreased between the decades 1921-30 and 1931-40, in almost all cases reversing a trajectory of increased and more varied consumption in the preceding decade.[58] Meat consumption, for example, declined from 18.8kg annual consumption per person in 1926-30 to 14.5kg consumed per capita each year in 1937.[59] Though regional and class distinctions in the foodstuffs and meals eaten by Italians of course persisted, in general terms the trends towards increasing choice and diversification in food consumption that had been underway since the Great War were halted, and even reversed, by fascist autarky. Per capita daily calorie consumption dropped to 2,641.[60]

That Italians, predominantly women as the procurers and preparers of family meals, did alter what they bought, cooked, and ate in the face of the impact of fascist autarkic policy and the onslaught of its propaganda did not necessarily confirm their enthusiastic "cooking of consent" for the regime. Many Italian housewives, as Helstosky put it, "work[ed] within the limits set by the drive towards self-sufficiency",[61] for example differentiating between foods eaten within the family and foods served to guests, as did, for that matter, shopkeepers. In Venice, for example, local fascist leaders repeatedly admonished "unscrupulous merchants" for not adhering to the maximum price regulations or for engaging in speculative or hoarding activity. Local shopkeepers and market-traders were fined, and named and shamed in the local press, for selling basic foods – beef, eggs, fish, and radicchio – at prices higher than those

stipulated.[62] What's more, the already established, often longstanding and, in its way, intimate, client-patron relationship which linked shopkeepers and consumers through relations of credit and trust, could be called upon to evade or circumvent the sanctions resistance restrictions. The Venetian Fascio was sure this was occurring in the case of 'obliging butcher[s]' who were – they speculated – setting aside 'beefsteak or a veal chop' in their icehouses to help clients serve meat on the prescribed meatless days of the week.[63] Non-conformity with regime strictures on autarkic consumption is not necessarily tantamount to resisting, or even rejecting these policies. Rather, the varied, sometimes evasive, responses of Italian to regime efforts to make shopping and consuming food politicised and patriotic acts are suggestive of the 'room for manoeuvre' that remained open, in spite of the limits placed by the state, to afford Italian shopkeepers and consumers the possibility to weigh the prioritising of economic and business, consumer preferences, and the performance of class and status identities, alongside politics and supposed patriotic duty in determining what they ate under the dictatorship.

Friends, family, neighbours, domesticity, intimacy

At base, the dictatorship was experienced and lived in and through the spaces and interactions of everyday life. As such, the family, the home, the neighbourhood, networks of kin and friends, were the fundamental units and shapers of experience of dictatorship and, therefore, comprised the basic actions, practices, relations and spaces in which the dictatorship was effectively constituted. Of course, individual Italians' family and community set-ups differed significantly, shaped by gender, age, region, class and occupation, whether one lived in a rural or urban setting and more. In rural peasant families, for example, the household habitually comprised multiple generations and couples living under the same roof, linked to neighbouring farmhouses through economic relations and social practices like the winter evening *veglia* [social gatherings often incorporating multiple households].[64] Urban working-class Italians might, dependant on age, marital status and occupation, live in factory dormitories, pensione rooms, or rented tenement apartments in close proximity and connected to other families by balconies and courtyards.[65] Social networks were established and maintained both through work and recreational time spent in cafes and bars for men, and for women, if married and mothers, principally through the interlinked domestic spaces of the neighbourhood.[66] For those of relative means, the household might also include domestic servants. Others lived in nuclear family units. Whilst there was significant variance and mobility in family and kin/friendship structures, spaces and networks, all formed vital conduits for the constructing and experiencing of fascism, its policies, values, and practices. Their importance was not lost on the regime.

The extent to which the fascist dictatorship sought to, and succeeded in, infiltrating and shaping the everyday relations of families, friends and neighbours and the domestic and neighbourhood spaces in which their interactions took place, might be considered the ultimate barometer of its reach. The PNF secretary, Augusto Turati, declared the family the 'basic cell of the State, the Nation and the people'.[67] In line with Mussolini's statement of totalitarian intent, it was therefore unthinkable that the family unit, and its prime space of operation, the home, be left 'outside the state'. Historians of other dictatorship have similarly accorded significant weight to the relationship between dictatorial regimes and families and the penetration of homes and the most intimate and personal of human relationships: in

relation to Nazi Germany, scholars have discussed the extent to which the 'four walls' of the home could offer a "safe haven" from the dictatorship.[68]

Undoubtedly, in Fascist Italy as in other illiberal regimes, the home and family were never insulated, apolitical safe havens. The state sought to scrutinise and enter domestic spaces and to politicise and to dictate the practices and interactions enacted therein. Agents of the state physically entered homes, for example, in the shape of political police officers, investigating potential 'subversive' activities or PNF health visitors [*visitattrici fasciste*] charged with inspecting parenting practices (of predominantly working class and rural labouring Italians) and advising on infant health under the auspices of the state's developing welfare structures. Women were advised to hang portraits of Mussolini on their walls so that their "children, tomorrow's soldiers, will learn to love him as he loves them".[69] In those that that could afford them – 400,000 in 1934 and over one million by the war – the Duce's voice was transmitted directly into middle-class households via radio.[70]

Family roles and relationships, friendship and acquaintance networks, as well as the most intimate dimensions of individuals' bodies, identity and/or practice, including sexuality, were all key vectors through which the dictatorship assessed individual Italians' political worth and through which individual Italians' relationship with the dictatorial state were conducted. For both men and women, status was accorded through relational roles, whether as prolific mothers awarded prizes for bearing several children, patriarchal benevolent-disciplinarian-breadwinner fathers, mothers or wives of fallen soldiers or of those "fallen for fascism", or as consumer-combatant providers of meals prepared from suitably national produce and practitioners of domestic autarky. The same logic that promoted procreation as a national duty dictated that women be prohibited from exerting bodily autonomy and choice: intention or incitement to terminate pregnancy, alongside the carrying out of 'abortive acts' were classified from 1930 as crimes "against the interest of the nation to ensure the continuity of the race".[71] Relatedly, within an ideological frame that prized masculine virility, homosexual and effeminate men were denigrated as "enem[ies] of the 'new man'" and, although homosexual acts were not criminalised in law, were subjected to police surveillance and, in many cases, persecution through confinement or imprisonment in the penal or asylum system.[72]

At a time when other European and North American states were increasingly intervening in parenting practices, the dictatorial states of interwar Europe took their 'right' to intercede in family life to new limits.[73] Although motherhood was an ideal that had been exalted since Italian unification (and long before), it was under fascism that prolific motherhood became a national duty, fundamentally connected to Italy's national and imperial ambitions.[74] But while imagined mothers and fathers were idealised, 'actually existing' Italian parents required intervention. In 1925 a national agency for maternity and infancy (ONMI) was set up to oversee pre- and post-natal policy and state child-care provision. Under its auspices, paediatric and maternal health clinics, social services, mothers' kitchens and crèches were created: by 1938 the agency boasted nation-wide 3,500 maternal health clinics, 4,400 infant health clinics, 1,300 kitchens and 190 *Case della Madre e del Bambino*, which brought healthcare, social assistance and propaganda initiatives under one local roof. Unmarried mothers were particularly targeted for assistance.[75] ONMI was a vital tool in the regime's 'demographic campaign', announced in 1927, with aims to reverse the perceived trend

towards 'voluntary motherhood', reduce infant mortality and the downward trajectory of the birth-rate, which in the early 1930s had dropped to 24 births per thousand persons, from a peak of 39 in the late nineteenth century.[76] Additionally, the regime rewarded prolific motherhood - and fatherhood - through myriad means including tax breaks, family allowances and birth prizes for the parents of large families (of more than seven living children).

The dictatorship put pressure on the affective relationships between parents and children as a means to solicit greater political engagement and attachment from both, and at the same time effectively sought to bypass parents entirely and establish a direct relationship between the state and Italian children. The schooling system and the institution of fascist youth groups, for girls and boys, through the *Opera Nazionale Balilla* (ONB, renamed in 1937 *Gioventù Italiana del Littorio*, GIL) were the vehicle for both approaches. Until 1937 when membership became compulsory for Italian children, parental permission was required; by tying (from 1928) educational bursaries and prizes, access to university and civil service jobs, and sometimes parents' employment to children's ONB membership, the regime applied social and economic pressures to entice more reluctant parents to sign up their children.[77] Equally, parents often felt pressured to enrol themselves in party groups in order to secure their family's prospects as the well-known alternate meaning of the PNF acronym – not *Partito Nazionale Fascista* but *per necessità famigliare* [for the needs of the family] – attested.[78]

The regime also sought direct conduits to Italian children that would neatly circumvent Italian parents through the schooling system, ONB and other, ostensibly welfare-focussed institutions which brought children under the direct supervision of the state, especially working-class, urban children whose parents were considered the most politically, and morally, suspect. *Colonie estive* [children's summer camps], run by the EOA in invigorating mountain, countryside and seaside resorts, and *recreatori fascisti*, effectively fascist after-school clubs, brought large numbers of working-class children - in 1939 4,526 summer camps hosted 806,964 children[79] – under the watchful eye of state-employed childcare workers, where they took part in military-esque and politically-indoctrinating activities and rituals, removed from what the authorities openly deemed "the tedium of segregation within the family where too often [children] vegetate in restricted and unhealthy environments'.[80] Neither did middle-class parents entirely escape state surveillance and intervention in their parenting practices: as part of the anti-sanctions resistance and autarky campaign and the mid-1930s anti-bourgeois 'custom reform' campaign, they found their (supposed) penchant for foreign-influenced parenting from choice of names, to governesses, to nursery reading material and for purchasing expensive children's clothing instead of making-do and mending, rebranded as unpatriotic.[81]

That some working-class families were seen to harbour an "unhealthy environment" and some middle-class class families an un-Italian and un-fascist environment for raising children as future fascists points to the mistrust that regime evidently harboured for 'actually-existing' parents, as well as to some of the boundary limits to the regime's insistence that the family comprised the 'basic cell' of its own idealised society. These limits, at their most destructive with the introduction of the Racial Laws, including 'anti-miscegenation' laws, from 1938, effectively denied the right to exist and dismantled, firstly in legal terms but also physically,

Italian families living on the peninsular and in the empire that included Jewish and mixed-race African members.[82]

The response of parents and children to the intrusions of the state into their affective familial relationships was marked by ambivalence. Of course, some youngsters evidently appreciated the quasi-parental role taken on by the state, enjoying the experience of holiday camps and ONB meetings and especially the opportunities they afforded for diversions with peers. However, evidence also suggest many Italians resented or tried to ignore fascist intrusions into their parenting choices. Certainly, fascist efforts to increase fecundity were largely disregarded. The birth rate failed to rise and in fact continued to decline throughout the 1930s, especially in the more urban centre-north regions.[83] Very few Italian couples took out the marriage loans which promised to incrementally cancel the debt owed upon the birth of each successive child.[84]

Individual women's recollections of the period suggest that fascist pronatalist rhetoric had little to no effect on their choices and actions around procreation. Their diaries and memoirs often hint at or explicitly show support for 'conscious maternity' and family planning practices. They reveal the (unsurprising) prioritisation of economic considerations in decisions about reproduction and, at times, starkly illustrate the enormous practical difficulties in raising healthy children in the often cold and unsanitary environments in which poor Italians were compelled to live.[85] In Venice, for example, Vana Arnould recalled her middle-class family's disapproval when news broke in 1933 that her uncle's wife was expecting their third child: "They had the delicacy to say to E; "better an illness than a pregnancy".[86] Just a short walk away from the Arnould family home at Ponte de la Comenda, Rosa d.C, who in 1926 had settled with her family in newly-constructed social housing on the island of Sant'Elena, faced the pain of enduring a series of miscarriages, stillbirths and infant-deaths in conditions blighted by poverty:

> Not because I wanted to take heed of the 'Duce's orders', but because we wanted to give a little sibling to B, who was always asking us for one, I had a little girl in 1928, whom we called Maria and another in 1930, whom we called Milena. Both died because they were born to me premature and, being born in winter in a house without heating, lived just a few hours and, in the little white box made by my dad, were buried in the cemetery of San Michele.[87]

Laws limiting and outlawing fertility control, including abortion, had been strengthened in 1926, 1927 and 1930 as the coercive 'stick' to complement the propaganda 'carrot' aimed at increasing births through the demographic campaign.[88] Midwives were particularly targeted for 'professionalisation' and state regulation, at least in part because their occupation positioned them to play key roles in helping women to terminate unwanted pregnancies.[89] Nevertheless, and despite the significant prison and *confino* punishment that awaited those who were found guilty of procuring or performing abortions, "abortion continued to exist, just as the midwives who could help procure it and the social networks that made it possible continued to exist".[90] According to the regime's own figures, recorded abortions increased from 65,676 in 1932 to 91,987 in 1939, estimated to equal approximately 18% of all pregnancies.[91] Such practices were sustained by knowledge-carrying networks, protected by "code[s] of silence and secrecy" and the often difficulty for state investigators to distinguish an induced abortion from a spontaneous miscarriage, reliant as they were on following

hearsay and rumour in the near absence of physical evidence. Among Luisa Passerini's interviewees, many of whom discussed their intimate decisions around birth control and procreation, induced abortion was acknowledged as commonplace:

> Look, I got pregnant again, and I didn't have any money. I didn't want any more, because I had to go to work because there wasn't enough money and he [her son] was three years old, so how was I to manage? […] I borrowed 500 lire and I had an abortion without saying anything to my husband. […] There were 2,000 women where I worked, but you know I saw so many die. Of abortions they carried out themselves.[92]

Historian Alessandra Gissi points out that the complex interplay of *sotto-voce* knowledge, secrecy and rumour, and the difficulty, certainly from the state's perspective, of discerning the "degree of voluntarism involved in the act', makes it tricky to categorise the multiple individual choices and actions of Italian women with respect to reproduction, certainly in terms of 'resistance'.[93] That said, the procurement of induced abortion amply demonstrates women's continued "capacity for agency", and the persistent centrality – sitting alongside and within overarching narratives of modernisation – of everyday community webs of knowledge and lived experiences of "reputation, public hearsay, networks, and relationships" that sustained this agency, which of course carried significant bodily risk, in spite of the heavily criminalised and policed terrain.[94]

Family, friends and acquaintances were a crucial resource in navigating the dictatorship, both as individual mediators and for the networks they created. As Luisa Passerini observed, everyday life in Fascist Italy comprised "a world of mediations" in which relations and interactions between individual Italians and the Fascist authorities (both in Rome and the localities) were very often shaped by intermediaries who, perhaps by virtue of their relational role or position in the community or locality, could effectively form a bridge between the two.[95] Importantly, seeing mediators and mediation as a key analytical tool through which to understand the 'actually-existing' relationship between individuals and the state in the fascist dictatorship is particularly useful because, unlike the rather blunter categories of 'consent' and 'dissent, mediation recognises the state-individual relationship as a two-way interaction, one that, albeit significantly asymmetrical, could afford individuals, via the intercession of mediators, some agency in shaping how and how far they accepted, rejected or modified state intrusion into their daily life. In addition, what results from understanding these processes as mediatory, rather than as a binary sequence of soliciting and conferring of consent or dissent, is a potentially more complex, multi-faceted, reading of the state-individual relationship in which it was possible for individuals to move between different stances at different times or in relation to different aspects of the regime's intrusions, or indeed to hold multiple stances simultaneously. In this way, an individual could exercise tacit approval or what Passerini terms 'pragmatic acceptance' of the regime's policies and expectations of them in one sphere, whilst disapproving or seeking distance themselves in another. They could, in sum, be "both perpetrators and victims, supporters and dissenters, participants and evaders" of the dictatorship through their everyday practices.[96] What's more, as Passerini shows, individuals' intentions whether seeking to gain proximity or distance to regime policies did not always pan out as intended; in practice mediatory processes embarked upon with the intention to help individuals gain distance from, or even to manifest non-conformity with regime expectations could, in the end, result in a form of pragmatic acceptance.[97]

There were a variety of roles that placed people in the position to function as mediators between individual and regime, some based on occupation or political rank, including the figure Passerini terms the 'good fascist', a local and usually low-ranking state official or neighbourhood party leader, or a local priest, building concierge, or shop-floor Syndicate representative who used their "positions of minor power […] to do good".[98] Conversely, corrupt fascists were also vital nodes in kinship and friendship networks seeking to navigating jobs, permits and other dealings with the authorities. Despite regime insistence that it was driving out the clientelism and nepotism that it saw as having characterised the Liberal era, within the PNF, from the top to the bottom of the hierarchy, individuals used family, friendship and acquaintance contacts to call in favours, profit financially or gain political advantage, sometimes through illegal means.[99] In this way, the Fascist *ras* [party boss] of Cremona, Roberto Farinacci could trade in *raccomandazioni* [confidential references] that would help out "a surgeon looking for a job, […or] a military man faced with an unwanted transfer", or, more politically, might allow individuals "to avoid categorisation as a Jew, to reverse an expulsion for the Fascist party, to get a son out of prison".[100]

By far the most prevalent mediators were those acting on their relational roles, as family members or friends. Women were particularly well placed to act as go-betweens or mediators between their husband or children and the regime. In Turin, Luigia Varusco, for example, intervened with the local *Fascio* on behalf of her son in the belief this would allow him to 'save face' in the compromise between regime and personal political belief. Varusco went herself to the local *Fascio* headquarters to request the party card her son needed in order to gain employment at the local factory; her intercession allowed, mother and son believed, the son to maintain "anti-fascist identity and family dignity" because "my son went to work with the receipt [but] the card they've still got it there now! Because I never went to get it!".[101] Conversely, in the San Vitale neighbourhood in Bologna, where the Faggioli family stuck out as being regime supporters when "everyone on the street was communist", a wife's mediations on behalf of her husband served to keep the family close to the regime. Signor Faggioli, though a 'fascist of the first hour' – the epithet given to those who had joined the fascist movement from its earliest pre-1922 days – was reportedly too 'lazy' to attend regular party meetings at the local Fascio; in order to maintain family position and influence and to hear the latest news, in his place, Signora Faggioli "went and then reported back when she returned home".[102]

Very often, the outcome of mediations was either not clear cut or could deviate from the originally intended purpose of the intercession. An episode, recounted in the memoir of Lina Cattalini, who was then an 8-year-old schoolgirl living in a village outside Bologna, is a case in point. Cattalini recalled how, when in 1933 her class was instructed to turn up, with their parents, to listen to a speech by some regime "high-ups' on the promise of a focaccia loaf each in return, following her father's point-blank refusal to attend, her mother interceded and agreed to accompany Lina to the *Casa del Fascio*. While the playing on affective child-parent relations and, indeed, the teacher-pupil relationship to ensure attendance at the speech paid off – the hall was "packed full between children and parents" – the more enduring result of this instance of a mediated state-individual interaction was to seal the family's irreparable distance from the dictatorship. Once the regime 'high-ups' had spoken and left, the local party boss, seated next to the teacher, stood up and announced that, rather

than distributing a focaccia loaf per family as had been promised, the loaves "are not for you. We will offer them to the poor". Looking around at the impoverished families in attendance, who had "walked several kilometres" to get there, Lina recalled the "huge let-down for those poor children" and the certainty that "my focaccia was definitely eaten by my teacher": 'for us, along with our parents, it was a great disrespect remembered for a lifetime".[103]

Family ties and 'social capital' could be deployed either to keep the regime at arm's length or to bring individuals closer to the regime, or both, precisely because of the ambivalence of the family vis a vis the state. The family was, in the words of Passerini following Horkheimer, a "key site and agent" of mediation between individuals and state, due to its "persistent ambiguity in relation to power".[104] As the pronouncements of the PNF secretary Turati made clear, the family was regarded by the fascist authorities as an entity with a public function; it was judged "the most distant outpost of government power" and was therefore expected to conduct itself with patriotism and in the service of the state.[105] However, it was precisely in the family unit's elision of public and private roles, its ability to move between outward- and inward-facing functions and practices that made it such a potentially useful entity to the fascist state in its pursuit of leaving nothing "outside the state", whilst it was also the family's fundamental "ambiguity in relation to power" that meant that it could never be entirely harnessed to the goals of the dictatorship.

The limits to the dictatorship's infiltration and manipulation of Italian families in the service of the fascist state were therefore delineated both by the actions of the regime and by "family strategies and cultures" that could draw upon "the peculiar qualities and resources that families have – flexibility, solidarities, networks, well-kept secrets and so on" to exert their own agency in response to fascist family policies.[106] The limits drawn by the state itself were formed of the failures to adequately finance the institutions it charged with enacting family policy, such as ONMI, and the mixed messages it sent out about how families were expected to behave and which families were considered worthy of support. While exalting an idealised vision of the family, and perhaps especially of mothers, the dictatorship demonstrated suspicion of those families whose lifestyles and practices it deemed politically and morally wanting, seeking in some respects to bypass parents altogether and establish direct relations with Italian children. And it demonstrated outright, destructive hostility, by the late 1930s, towards families that were seen to fall outside the regime's increasingly open racist notions of racial purity. In this way, the family until could never hope to be a secure "safe haven" from dictatorship, neither as a space which might allow for apolitical expression or for the expression of 'oppositional familism'?[107] Nor could it, even on the regime's own terms, furnish a 'basic cell' with which to build a new fascist society. Rather, in multivalent and shifting, elusive ways, the family sat stubbornly both "inside" and "outside the state".

Conclusion

The 'everyday' is a crucial arena in which to examine the functioning of the fascist dictatorship in Italy. With intent and purpose, the regime sought to intrude into the everyday worlds of Italians, their habits and practices, their spaces of interaction, and their relationships, in order to turn these to achieving the dictatorship's principal goals of autarky, demographic growth, national regeneration and imperial conquest, and to turn ordinary Italians into fascists worthy – in the regime's own contorted estimation – of a restored and revitalised Italian nation and

empire. To achieve this, by Mussolini's own acknowledgement, it would be necessary to rule Italians with "ferocious totalitarian will" and to render "everything" within the purview of the state.

The Mussolinian dictatorship sought to infiltrate, survey and harness all aspects of Italians' day-to-day lives using policies, structures, rhetoric and rituals that intentionally combined the intent to compel with the intent to persuade. Alongside the crude use of *squadrista* violence and the state-led and institutionalised environment of repression and fear that superseded it from the mid 1920s, sat institutions like the OND, ONB, ONMI, and the EOA that were ostensibly intended to fill Italians' 'free' time, provide welfare, promote health and meet material wants and needs, but which also policed Italians' behaviour and practices and created forms of societal inclusion and exclusion in line with fascism's gendered and racist worldview.

Italians' reactions to these overlapping and mutually-reinforcing apparatus of coercion and persuasion were multivalent and complicated. Violence elicited fear, retreat, and exile but also shifts in how and where political expression and non-conformist behaviour were given voice and enacted. Spaces like private homes and bars had always been venues for political discussion and action but with the dismantling of non-fascist party headquarters, press, and social clubs, they took on renewed importance. Violence could also be for many Italians a source of positive approval who saw in the regime's repression of presumed 'subversives' (a category that never included only political opponents but also the socially marginalised such as homosexuals, foreigners, sex workers, alcoholics and vagrants) a government that was restoring law and order, stability and discipline to society. For their part, the structures intended to provide diversion, recreation and assistance were received with similar ambivalence. Undoubtedly for many, the PNF, ONB, OND and welfare organisations were sources of genuine entertainment, enjoyment and support. At the same time and for others, they were structures that were difficult, if not impossible to avoid. Effectively enforced engagement with the party or with Balilla groups was subjected to complicated processes of negotiation and mediation, through which ordinary Italians sought to make half-choices and compromises in relation to regime prescriptions and expectations, which, whether they were intended to gain increased distance or proximity to the regime, were always calibrated to benefit oneself or one's family.

Without downplaying the severity of the fascist 'police state' and its ability to intrude into Italians' everyday lives, Mussolini's stated intention to incorporate "everything within the state, nothing outside the state, nothing against the state" could never fully be realised. There were limits to the regime's intendedly totalitarian reach. These limits were demarcated in part by the regime itself. By failing to thoroughly 'fascistise' the police, by creating a patchwork and heterogenous collation of leisure groups under the umbrella of the OND, by significantly underfunding ONMI and concentrating its centre in the centre-north, rather than in the southern regions where infant mortality was highest, and by sending out often contradictory messages about what the regime expected of Italians in their everyday compartment, for example in relation to autarkic food consumption, the regime itself reduced its capacity to fully extend its grasp into all aspects of everyday life. In other respects, the limits to the regime's reach were posited by external forces, above all by the lure of the expanding consumer market and the transnational transfer of cultural products, images,

mores and habits principally associated with 'America', as Hollywood films, cocktails, jazz music and dancing captured (or so it was feared) the attention of young, urban, middle-class Italians and (again, so it was feared) turned their heads from national and fascist products, pastimes and values. Finally, and crucially, the limits to fascism's reach into their everyday worlds were also placed by ordinary Italians themselves. Through their myriad everyday actions, speech-acts, practices and interrelations, they found ways and 'room to manoeuvre' towards, around, and from regime impositions (not always with full awareness or as intended), albeit within the restricted parameters of the dictatorship. As such, they were able to use the regime's own differentiation in the *Duce* cult between the figure of Mussolini and the party to find oblique ways to make fun of, or to criticise the regime. They could work up to, and occasionally around, the dictatorship's prescriptions on 'alimentary sovereignty', drawing on the relationship of trust between shopkeepers and clients to circumvent the anti-sanctions restrictions on meat consumption or giving primacy to commercial and financial priorities to ignore its maximum price limits on basic goods. They could draw on family, friends, neighbours and local acquaintances, as individual mediators and as nodes in social networks to exert continued, but circumscribed, "capacity for agency" in shaping their relationship and interactions with the fascist authorities and their day-to-day lives within the dictatorship. As such, the sphere of everyday life is a key arena wherein the dictatorship was constituted, wherein the dictatorship as it 'actually existed', rather than as it was intended, proclaimed or represented, was stitched together and therefore also wherein it might, in limited and ephemeral ways, be modified and unravelled.

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[1] Benito Mussolini (Edoardo Susmel & Duilio susmel eds.) *Opera omnia* vol. 21 (Florence: La Fenice, 1951) 425.
[2] Giulia Barrera 'Patrilinearity, race, and identity: The upbringing of Italo-Eritreans during Italian colonialism' in Ruth Ben-Ghiat & Mia Fuller M. eds. *Italian Colonialism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005) 97-108.
[3] Joshua Arthurs, Michael Ebner, Kate Ferris 'Introduction' in Joshua Arthurs, Michael Ebner, Kate Ferris eds. *The Politics of Everyday Life in Fascist Italy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017) 1-17.
[4] Giulia Albanese *La marcia su Roma* (Rome, Laterza, 2006).
[5] Michael Ebner *Ordinary Violence in Mussolini's Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011) 12; 41-4.
[6] Jonathan Dunnage *Mussolini's Policemen: behaviour, ideology and institutional culture in representation and practice* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012) 79-80
[7] Ebner *Ordinary Violence* 52; Dunnage *Mussolini's Policemen* 37.
[8] Dunnage *Mussolini's Policemen* 45.
[9] Dunnage *Mussolini's Policemen* 49.
[10] Ebner *Ordinary Violence* 166-214; Kate Ferris 'Everyday spaces. Bars, alcohol and the spatial framing of everyday political practice and interaction in fascist Italy*' European History Quarterly* forthcoming.
[11] Paul Corner 'Italian Fascism. Whatever happened to dictatorship?' *Journal of Modern History* 74, 2002, 332.
[12] The number of police operations is from Renzo De Felice *Mussolini il duce: Gli anni del consenso* (Turin, Einaudi, 1974) 83, cited in Corner 'Italian Fascism' 333; Ebner *Ordinary Violence* 62.
[13] Albert Aquaraone *L'organizzazione dello stato totalitario* (Turin, 1996 [1965]) 108; Corner 'Italian Fascism' 334.
[14] Richard Bosworth *Mussolini's Italy* 4.
[15] Corner 'Italian Fascism' 336-7; Ebner *Ordinary Violence* 11.
[16] Aquarone *L'organizzazione* 97-110; Ebner *Ordinary Violence* 44; Adrian Lyttelton *The Seizure of Power: fascism in Italy, 1919-1929* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1973, 297-8..
[17] Lucy Maulsby 'Case del fascio and the Making of Modern Italy", *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, 20.5, 2015, 663-685.
[18] Vana Arnould *Me g'ha contà la nonna* ADN MP/And 202.
[19] Ferris 'Everyday spaces'.

[20] Luisa Passerini *Fascism in Popular Memory: the cultural experience of the Turin working class* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009 [1987]) 129-133,
[21] Giulia Albanese 'Violence and Political Participation in the Rise of Fascism (1919-1926)' in Giulia Albanese & Roberta Pergher eds. *In the Society of Fascists: Acclamation, Acquiescence and Agency in Mussolini's Italy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012) 63.
[22] Albanese 'Violence' 50.
[23] Richard Bosworth 'Per Necessità Famigliare: Hypocrisy and Corruption in Fascist Italy' *European History Quarterly* vol. 30.3, 2000, 357-387.
[24] Corner 'Italian Fascism' 342-3.
[25] Corner 344-5.
[26] Emilio Gentile *The Sacralization of Politics in Fascist Italy* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996).
[27] Stephen Gundle, Christopher Duggan, Giuliana Pieri *The cult of the Duce: Mussolini and the Italians* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2013); Luisa Passerini *Mussolini Immaginario: storia di una biografia, 1915-1939* (Rome-Bari: Laterza, 1991).
[28] Alessandra Antola Swan *Photographing Mussolini. The Making of a Political Icon* (New York & London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020).
[29] Christopher Duggan *Fascist Voices. An Intimate History of Mussolini's Italy* (London: Vintage Books, 2013).
[30] Philip Morgan '"The years of consent"?. Popular attitudes and forms of resistance to fascism in Italy, 1925-1940' in Tim Kirk & Anthony McElligott eds. *Opposing Fascism. Community, Authority and Resistance in Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) 176.
[31] Victoria de Grazia *The Culture of Consent. Mass organization of leisure in Fascist Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002 [1981]).
[32] Lucy Maulsby 'Case del fascio and the Making of Modern Italy", *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, 20.5, 2015, 666-668.
[33] de Grazia *The Culture of Consent* 55.
[34] de Grazia *The Culture of Consent* 19.
[35] de Grazia *The Culture of Consent* vii.
[36] On the dances held in fascist venues see Anna Tonelli *E ballando ballando. La storia d'Italia a passi di danza (1815-1996)* (Milan: FrancoAngeli, 1998) 205-6. See also Kate Ferris 'Dancing through dictatorship: everyday practices and affective experiences of social dancing in Fascist Italy' in Klaus Nathaus and James Nott eds. *Social Worlds of Dancing: Practices, Transfers and Infrastructures between the World Wars* (Manchester, forthcoming).
[37] Ferris 'Dancing' page no. not yet known.
[38] De Grazia *The Culture of Consent* vii.
[39] Anna Harwell Celenza, *Jazz Italian Style From its Origins in New Orleans to Fascist Italy and Sinatra* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017) pp. 110-118; see also Tonelli, *E ballando,* p. 212 and Camilla Poesio *Tutto è ritmo, tutto è swing. Il Jazz, il fascismo e la società italiana* (Milan: Mondadori, 2018)79-84 on 'Jazz and musical nationalism' and 95-108 on 'Jazz and racism'
[40] Kate Ferris 'Women and alcohol consumption in Fascist Italy' *Gender and History* (forthcoming).
[41] Stephen Gundle *Mussolini's Dream Factory*: *Film Stardom in Fascist Italy* (New York & Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2013); James Hay *Popular Film Culture in Fascist Italy: The Passing of the Rex* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987).
[42] Victoria de Grazia *Irresistible Empire: America's Advance through Twentieth-Century Europe* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005) 288.
[43] Gundle *Mussolini's Dream Factory* 22-3.
[44] Gundle *Mussolini's Dream Factory* 29; De Grazia *Irresistible Empire* 318-9.
[45] On the 'star system' see Gundle *Mussolini's Dream Factory*; on ticket sales increased see de Grazia *Irresistible Empire* 319.
[46] The quotations are from Gundle *Mussolini's Dream Factory* 72 and James Hay, *Popular Film Culture in Fascist Italy: The Passing of the Rex* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987) p. 109; see also Emanuela Scarpellini, *Material Nation: A Consumer's History of Modern Italy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011) 83.
[47] Carol Helstosky 'Fascist food politics: Mussolini's policy of alimentary sovereignty' *Journal of Modern Italian Studies* vol. 9.1, 2004 1-26.
[48] Jonathan Morris "Retailers, Fascism, and the Origins of the Social Protection of Shopkeepers in Italy" *Contemporary European History* 5.3, 1996, 218; Kate Ferris 'Consumption' in Joshua Arthurs, Michael Ebner, Kate Ferris eds. *The Politics of Everyday Life in Fascist Italy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017) 124.
[49] Ferris 'Consumption' 128-135.
[50] Carol Helstosky *Garlic and Oil: Politics and Food in Italy* (Oxford: Berg, 2004) 101.
[51] Ferris 'Consumption' 130-5.

[52] Antonio Baldo, *Ricordi di Guerra di un diciasettenne: 1940-1945* Archivio Diaristico Nazionale (ADN) MP/02, 20.
[53] Perry Willson 'Empire, Gender and the 'Home Front' in Fascist Italy' *Women's History Review* vol. 16.4, 2007, 491-2.
[54] Helstosky *Garlic* 84.
[55] Helstosky *Garlic* 76.
[56] In 1921-30, wheat availability was 178.5kg per capita; in 1931-40, this reduced to 164.4kg per capita. Hestosky *Garlic* 76.
[57] Helstosky 'Fascist food politics' 5.
[58] Emanuela Scarpellini *Material Nation. A Consumer History of Modern Italy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011) 5-7.
[59] Helstosky 'Fascist food politics' 8.
[60] Scarpellini *Material Nation* 7.
[61] Helstosky *Garlic* 81.
[62] Ferris 'Consumption' 136-7.
[63] *Gazzetta di Venezia* 20 November 1935, cited in Ferris 'Consumption' 139
[64] Paul Ginsborg *Family politics: domestic life, devastation and survival 1900-1950* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014) 163; 166.
[65] Ginsborg *Family politics* 152.
[66] Ginsborg *Family politics* 152.
[67] Augosto Turati 'Il partiti e I suoi compiti' pp. 190-1, cited in R.J.B. Bosworth *Mussolini's Italy. Life under the dictatorship* (London: Penguin, 2006) p. 245
[68] In the work of Detlev Peukert, an early pioneer of everyday life history, the memory trope of 'withdrawal' "within the family circle or among close friends' was a notable refrain in individuals' accounts of quotidian life in the Third Reich. Detlev Peukert (Richard Deveson trans.) *Inside Nazi Germany. Conformity, Opposition and Racism in Everyday Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987). Still, as Lisa Pine demonstrates, "the home was not a safe haven insulated from National Socialism". Lisa Pine ed. *The Family in Modern Germany* (London: Bloomsbury Academic 2020) 271.
[69] *Gazzetta di Venezia* 17 November 1935; cited in Kate Ferris *Everyday Life in Fascist Venice, 1929-40* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012) 133.
[70] The figures refer to the number of subscribers to EIAR, the national radio broadcaster. A significant number of Italians listened to the radio not in their homes but in public spaces including bars, OND centres, and schools – by 1939 9,000 'collective radios' reached an audience of 850,000 people. Jacopo Tomatis *Storia culturale della canzone italiana* (Milan: il saggiatore, 2019) 34.
[71] Alessandra Gissi 'Reproduction' in Arthurs, Ebner, Ferris *The Politics of Everyday Life* 101-2.
[72] Lorenzo Benadusi *The enemy of the new man: homosexuality in fascist Italy* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2012).
[73] Ginsborg *Family Politics*; Hester Barron and Claudia Siebrecht eds. *Parenting and the State in Britain and Europe c. 1870 – 1950: Raising the Nation.* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).
[74] Perry Willson *Women in twentieth-century Italy* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010) 62.
[75] Perry Willson 'Opera nazionale per la maternità e infanzia (Onmi)' in Victoria de Grazia & Sergio Luzzatto *Dizionario del fascismo* vol. 2 (Turin: Einaudi, 2003) 273-7.
[76] Victoria de Grazia *How Fascism Ruled Women* (Berkeley: University of California Press) 46.
[77] Tracy Koon *Believe, Obey, Fight. Political Socialisation of Youth in Fascist Italy 1922-1943* (Chapel Hill & London: University of North Carolina Press, 1985) 95-6.
[78] Passerini *Fascism* 140-4; Bosworth 'Per necessità famigliare' 366-7.
[79] Koon *Believe, Obey, Fight* 102-103.
[80] *Rivista di Venezia* March 1931 'La scuola comunale a Venezia nel 1930' 112-20.
[81] Kate Ferris 'Parents, children and the fascist state. The production and reception of children's magazines in 1930s Italy' in Barron & Siebrecht eds. *Parenting and the State* 183-205.
[82] Giulia Barrera 'Mussolini's Colonial Race Laws and State-Settlers Relations in AOI (1935-41)' in *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, vol. 8.3, 2003 425-44; Ginsborg *Family politics* 214-9.
[83] De Grazia *How Fascism Ruled Women* 46.
[84] Willson *Women* 66.
[85] Indeed, Giuseppe Bottai's own analysis was that the failure of fascism's 'fecund decade' must be ascribed to the elevated levels of economic privation in Italian society; cited in Maria Quine "From Malthus to Mussolini: The Italian Eugenics Movement and Fascist population policy 1890-1938" PhD thesis, University College London, 1990, 247.
[86] ADN MP/And Arnould V. *Me g'ha contà la nonna* 218.
[87] R.d.C. *Mi chiamo R.d.C.* ADN MP/86, 49.

[88] Willson *Women* 66-7.
[89] Gissi 'Reproduction' 125.
[90] Gissi 'Reproduction' 103.
[91] Gissi 'Reproduction' 114.
[92] Cited in Passerini *Fascism* 161.
[93] Gissi 'Reproduction' 113; Luisa Passerini did use the category 'resistance to demographic policy' in this context: Passerini *Fascism* 150-182.
[94] Gissi 'Reproduction' 115.
[95] Passerini *Fascism* 138-144.
[96] Joshua Arthurs, Michael Ebner, Kate Ferris 'Introduction' in Arthurs, Ebner, Ferris eds. *The Politics of Everyday Life* 9.
[97] Passerini *Fascism* 138-144.
[98] Passerini *Fascism* 142-3.
[99] Richard Bosworth 'Per Necessità Famigliare'; Paul Corner *The Fascist Party and Popular Opinion in Mussolini's Italy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).
[100] Richard Bosworth 'Everyday Mussolinism: Friends, Family, Locality and Violence' *Contemporary European History* 14.1, 2005, 29-30.
[101] Passerini *Fascism* 139.
[102] ADN Laura Faggioli, 'Ricordi di Via S. Leonardo e dintorni' MP/98 3.
[103] ADN MP/14, Lina Cattani, 'Il furto delle mie mucche - Racconti di dolci e amari frammenti di vita vissuta nella prima metà del '900', story 18, 'La focaccia' n.p.
[104] Passerini *Fascism in Popular Memory* 139; M Horkheimer (MJ. O'Connell et al. trans.) *Critical Theory: selected essays* (New York: Continuum, 1999) 'Authority and the family'.
[105] Turati 'Il partiti e i suoi compiti' 190-1, cited in Bosworth *Mussolini's Italy* 245.
[106] Ginsborg *Family politics* 223-4.
[107] Victoria de Grazia used the concept of 'oppositional familism' by which she intended family units who were 'unresponsive, if not resistant, to appeals on behalf of the fatherland'. De Grazia *How fascism ruled women* 82. Along similar lines, historian of everyday life under Stalin, Sheila Fitzpatrick, described the 'great resilience' of Russian families in the face of Soviet attempts to fundamentally transform domestic and family life. Sheila Fitzpatrick *Everyday Stalinism. Ordinary life in extraordinary times* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).