This is a controversial reappraisal of the Italian occupation of the Mediterranean during the Second World War, which Davide Rodogno examines for the first time within the framework of Fascist imperial ambitions. He focuses on the European territories annexed and occupied by Italy between 1940 and 1943: metropolitan France, Corsica, Slovenia, Croatia, Dalmatia, Montenegro, Albania, Kosovo, western Macedonia and mainland and insular Greece. He explores Italy’s plans for Mediterranean expansion, its relationship with Germany, economic exploitation, the forced ‘Italianization’ of the annexed territories, collaboration, repression and Italian policies towards refugees and Jews. He also compares Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany through their dreams of imperial conquest, the role of racism and anti-Semitism, and the ‘Fascistization’ of the Italian army. Based largely on unpublished sources, this is a ground-breaking contribution to genocide, resistance, war crimes and occupation studies as well as to the history of the Second World War more generally.

DAVIDE RODOGNO is Academic Fellow in the School of Modern History at the University of St Andrews.

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FASCISM’S EUROPEAN EMPIRE

Italian Occupation During the Second World War

DAVIDE RODOGNO
University of St Andrews

Translated by Adrian Belton


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Foreword

Amid an abundance of studies on the first half of the twentieth century, Davide Rodogno’s book stands out for two reasons: first its intrinsic quality, and second its interest, for it jointly addresses two topics of prime historical interest: the history of Fascism and Italy’s military occupations.

Fascism continues to be much studied, especially in regard to Italy, and for indubitably good reasons: the Italians were both the protagonists and the victims of its history. Yet the international dimension of Fascism has been somewhat neglected, with the exception of some studies on foreign policy and the colonial empire.

The first merit of Rodogno’s book is that it furnishes us with a more complete understanding of Fascism as regards both its ambitions and the realities of one of its essential dimensions, that of territorial expansion.

First, the ambitions. Numerous projects for the ‘new order’ were put forward by the Italian press and by the regime’s propaganda in 1941, the year when hopes were highest that Italy’s ‘historic mission’ was soon to be accomplished. These projects – whose content, it must be said, was vague – referred to the empire then being built, an empire which once again centred on Rome because it added Mediterranean territories in Europe itself to the already-existing possessions in North and East Africa. By examining the European order of the new ‘Roman’ empire, Rodogno’s book conducts a comprehensive survey of the territories occupied by Fascist Italy in Greece, Yugoslavia, France and Albania, a protectorate since 1939.

Second, the realities. That the new order was not accomplished was due to the prolongation of the war and the obstacles raised by relations with Nazi Germany. The Fascist regime had to combine – unsuccessfully, as we know – its endeavour to achieve its imperial aims with defence of its interests against its principal ally. Rodogno’s examination of Fascist imperial expansion provides a fascinating account of the differentiated administration of the occupied territories, and in particular of Mussolini’s pivotal ‘Napoleonic’ role, as well as those of military leaders and diplomats.
Foreword

The second merit of the book lies in its contribution to the history of military occupations. This is a relatively neglected area; and especially so in Italy, given that its historical experience in such matters is not comparable to that of France or Germany. Yet this is an extremely interesting topic because a military occupation involves not only the superimposition of one administrative apparatus upon another within the same territory (provided the victor allows the defeated country’s administration to continue), but also face-to-face confrontation between two societies.

In this regard, Rodogno cleverly marshals the scant documentation available to furnish original insights into the relationships between the occupiers and the occupied. One reads with profit everything that he writes about the lives of soldiers – almost none of whom had ever been away from home – as they struggled to cope with alien climates, lands and societies. The relationships he describes range among love affairs, dealings on the black market, the ‘d system’ (from the French système débrouille, ‘being resourceful’) and vicious reprisals. The harshness of the Italian army’s repressive measures in the occupied territories has often been minimized. While we await entirely free access to the archives to be granted to scholars, the account in this book is sufficient to provide a more realistic idea of what those measures actually were.

Of equal interest is Rodogno’s treatment of another topic (better known but usually treated in isolation): Fascist policy towards Jewish refugees in the territories controlled by the Italian army. It seems that this policy was determined less by the alleged ‘humanitarianism’ of the Italians – although this nevertheless existed – than by a set of important factors, principal among which was the conflictual and competitive relationship with the Nazi senior partner. Rodogno’s analysis is a fine example of how broader contextualization yields further understanding of a phenomenon thought to be already thoroughly known.

Finally, considering that Rodogno’s study is based on painstaking archival research and mastery of a large body of secondary sources, it is bound to ‘make history’, so to speak. I greet its publication with pleasure.

Philippe Burrin
This book sets out the results of research for my doctoral thesis in international relations submitted in 2001 to the Institut Universitaire de Hautes Études Internationales of Geneva. I wish to express my profound gratitude to Philippe Burrin for his unstinting support and inspiration during these years. He has stimulated my interest in the subject and encouraged me to explore new avenues, constantly furnishing new interpretations and insights. I am also indebted to Bruno Arcidiacono for his guidance both personal and scientific as I wrote this book. I also thank Pierre Milza for his acute observations on my work; the Fonds National de la Recherche Scientifique Suisse, without whose assistance I could not have conducted my research; and the Istituto di Studi Politici of the Università ‘La Sapienza’ of Rome. I am especially grateful to Emilio Gentile, Mario Toscano and Giuseppe Conti for constantly treating me with such cordiality, for making their vast knowledge available to me, and also for their valuable advice. Crucial for the writing of this book have been my correspondence and interviews with Matthew Leitner, Gerold Krozewski, Stevan Pavlowitch and Giorgio Rochat, and my conversations with Michele Sarfatti, Spartaco Capogreco, Piero Crociani and Raffaele Rodogno. No less valuable has been the assistance of Adrian Belton, with his acute comments and careful reading of my research, and Adolfo Mignemi, who prepared the section of photographs. As regards the CUP edition in particular, I am immensely grateful to LSE London professors MacGregor Knox and David Stevenson, and I am indebted to Anita Prazmowska, who encouraged me to send a synopsis of the book to the editor, and to my friends Jasna Dragovic Soso, Dejan Djokic and Ilaria Favretto. I owe a particular debt of gratitude to Ms Lina Panetta of the London Italian Cultural Institute. The Cambridge edition has been published with the financial assistance of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs through the Istituto Italiano di Cultura, London, and the Segretariato Europeo per le Pubblicazioni Scientifiche.
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Obviously, the usual disclaimer applies: responsibility for the contents of this book is mine alone.

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Note on the translation

Italian and French place names are generally translated into English. Greek, Yugoslav, Albanian, Macedonian and Bulgarian place names lack uniformity. As far as an English translation was found they have been translated; otherwise I have chosen to maintain the place names as they appear in the Italian documents. Therefore some errors may remain.

Most data points in the tables taken directly from the archives are given in this book as they appeared in the original, including some obvious mistakes.
### Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'A'</td>
<td>Assistenza (Welfare)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AA.CC.</td>
<td>Affari Commerciali (Commercial Affairs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AA.CIV.</td>
<td>Affari Civili (Civil Affairs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AA.FF.</td>
<td>Affari Finanziari (Financial Affairs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AA.GG.</td>
<td>Affari Generali (General Affairs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AA.GG.RR.</td>
<td>Affari Generali e Riservati (General and Confidential Affairs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AA.PP.</td>
<td>Affari Politici (Political Affairs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AA.RR.</td>
<td>Affari Riservati (Confidential Affairs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC</td>
<td>Alto Commissario / Alto Commissariato (High Commissioner / High Commission)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACICR</td>
<td>Archives du Comité International de la Croix-Rouge (Archives of the International Committee of the Red Cross)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACJ</td>
<td>Anonima Commercio Jonico (Ionian Commercial Joint-Stock Company)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACP</td>
<td>Affari Collettivi Prefetture (General Prefecture Affairs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACS</td>
<td>Archivio Centrale dello Stato, Rome (Central State Archive)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGIP</td>
<td>Azienda Generale Italiana Petroli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALI</td>
<td>Azienda Ligniti Italiane (Italian Lignite Corporation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMMI</td>
<td>Azienda Minerali Metallici Italiani (Italian Metallic Minerals Corporation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AOI</td>
<td>Africa Orientale Italiana (Italian East Africa)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARMIR</td>
<td>Armata Italiana in Russia (Italian Army in Russia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASBI</td>
<td>Archivio Storico della Banca d'Italia (Historical Archive of the Bank of Italy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASMAE</td>
<td>Archivio Storico del Ministero degli Affari Esteri (Historical Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>busta (envelope)</td>
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List of abbreviations

BAC Banda Anticommunista (Anti-Communist Band)
BCI Banca Commerciale Italiana (also COMIT)
BDI Banca d’Italia (Bank of Italy)
BK Balli Kombetar (National Union)
BNL Banca Nazionale del Lavoro
CBUCEI Centro Bibliografico dell’Unione delle Comunità Ebraiche Italiane (Documentation Centre of the Union of Italian Jewish Communities)
CC.NN. Camicie Nere (Blackshirts)
CC.RR. Carabinieri Reali (Royal Military Police)
CdA Corpo d’Armata (Army Corps)
CDEC Centro di Documentazione Ebraica Contemporanea (Centre for Contemporary Jewish Documentation)
CEPIC Commissione Economica Permanente Italo-Croata (Permanent Italo-Croat Economic Commission)
CIAF Commissione Italiana d’Armistizio con la Francia (Italian Armistice Commission with France)
CIB Controllo Industrie Belliche, Sottocommissione CIAF (CIAF War Industry Control Subcommission)
CIOM Compagnia Italiana Oriente Mediterraneo
COM. SUP. Comando Superiore (High Command)
COMIT Banca Commerciale Italiana (also BCI)
CONI Comitato Olimpico Nazionale Italiano (Italian National Olympic Committee)
CONSU VI Consorzio per le Sovvenzioni su Valori Industriali (Industrial Subsidies Consortium)
Cp compagia (company)
CRI Croce Rossa Italiana (Italian Red Cross)
CS Comando Supremo (Supreme Command)
CSI Comando Supremo Interforze (Supreme Inter-Force Command)
CSIR Corpo di Spedizione Italiano in Russia (Italian Expeditionary Force in Russia)
CSM Capo di Stato Maggiore (Army Chief of Staff)
CSMG Capo di Stato Maggiore Generale (Army General Chief of Staff)
CTA Commissione Tedesca d’Armistizio con la Francia (German Commission on Armistice with France)
DDI Documenti diplomatici italiani (Italian diplomatic documents)
<table>
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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tr>
<td>DEGRIGES</td>
<td>DeutscheGriechische-Warenausgleichgesellschaft (German–Greek Trade Balancing Association)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DGAC</td>
<td>Direzione Generale Affari Commerciali, Ministero degli Esteri (Department of General Commercial Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DGDR</td>
<td>Direzione Generale Demografia e Razza, Ministero dell’Interno (Department for Demography and Race, Ministry of the Interior)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DGFP</td>
<td>Documents on German Foreign Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DGPS</td>
<td>Direzione Generale Pubblica Sicurezza, Ministero dell’Interno (Public Security Department, Ministry of the Interior)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPF</td>
<td>Dēpartement Politique Fèdèrale, Bern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRA</td>
<td>Delegazione Rimpatrio e Assistenza (Delegation for Repatriation and Assistance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAM</td>
<td>Ethniko Apelefterotikó Metópo (Greek National Liberation Front)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EIAA</td>
<td>Ente Industrie e Attività Agrarie (Agricultural Industry and Assets Board)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EIAR</td>
<td>Ente Italiano Audizioni Radiofoniche (Italian Radio Broadcasting Corporation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFTF</td>
<td>Emanuele Filiberto Testa di Ferro (Army Division)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESCATA</td>
<td>Ente per gli Scambi Commerciali e gli Approvvigionamenti nei Territori Annessi (Authority for Trade and Supplies in the Annexed Territories)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fasc.</td>
<td>fascicolo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FFEA</td>
<td>Forze Armate (Armed Forces)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIAT</td>
<td>Fabbrica Italiana Automobili Torino</td>
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<tr>
<td>GABAP</td>
<td>Gabinetto Armistizio–Pace (Armistice–Peace Cabinet)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GaF</td>
<td>Guardia alla Frontiera (Border Guards)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAN</td>
<td>Gruppi d’Azione Nizzardi (Nice Action Groups)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GdF</td>
<td>Guardia di Finanza (Financial Police)</td>
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<td>GIL</td>
<td>Gioventù Italiana del Littorio (Fascist Youth Organization)</td>
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<td>GILE</td>
<td>Gioventù Italiana del Littorio all’Estero (Fascist Youth Organization Abroad)</td>
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<tr>
<td>GILL</td>
<td>Gioventù Italiana del Littorio di Lubiana (Ljubljana Fascist Youth Organization)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘I’</td>
<td>Informazioni (Intelligence)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
List of abbreviations

ICRC International Committee of the Red Cross
IFI Istituto Finanziario Italiano (Italian Financial Institute)
INA Istituto Nazionale delle Assicurazioni (National Insurance Institute)
IRI Istituto per la Ricostruzione Industriale (Industrial Reconstruction Institute)
ISPI Istituto per gli Studi di Politica Internazionale (Institute for International Political Studies)
ISR Istituto Pavese per la Storia della Resistenza e dell’Età Contemporanea
ISTAT Istituto Centrale di Statistica (Central Statistical Institute)
KKE Komunistikon Komma Ellados (Greek Communist Party)
MAE Minisetro degli Affari Esteri (Ministry of Foreign Affairs)
MI Ministero dell’Interno (Ministry of the Interior)
MINCULPOP Ministero di Cultura Popolare (Ministry of Popular Culture)
MVAC Milizie Volontarie Anticomuniste (Anti-Communist Voluntary Militias)
MVSN Milizia Volontaria Sicurezza Nazionale (Voluntary Fascist Militia)
NDH Nezavisna Drzava Hrvatska (Independent State of Croatia)
OF Osvobodilna Fronta (Liberation Front)
OKW Ober Kommando Wehrmacht (Armed Forces High Command)
OND Opera Nazionale Dopolavoro (National Working-Men’s Guild)
OUL Organizzazione Universitaria di Lubiana (Ljubljana University Organization)
OVRA Opera vigilanza Repressione Antifascista (Anti-Fascism Intelligence Agency)
‘P’ Propaganda
PCM Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri (Cabinet Office)
PFA Partito Fascista Albanese (Albanian Fascist Party)
PNF Partito Nazionale Fascista (National Fascist Party)
POW prisoner of war
PS Pubblica Sicurezza (police)
List of abbreviations

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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>QG</td>
<td>Quartier Général (headquarters)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RDL</td>
<td>Regio decreto legge (royal decree)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RGF</td>
<td>Regia Guardia di Finanza (Royal Customs and Finance Police)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rgt</td>
<td>regiment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RKKS</td>
<td>Reichskreditkassenscheine (Reich credit cashier bills)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RM</td>
<td>Reichsmark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SACA</td>
<td>Società Anonima Commercio Adriatico (Adriatic Trade Corporation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SACIG</td>
<td>Società Anonima Commercio Italo-Greco (Italo-Greek Trade Corporation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAMIA</td>
<td>Società Anonima Mineraria Italo-Albanese (Italo-Albanian Minerals Corporation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAPIC</td>
<td>Società Anonima per i Lavori Pubblici in Croazia (Croatian Public Works Corporation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCAEF</td>
<td>Sottocommissione Affari Economici e Finanziari della CIAF (CIAF Economic and Financial Affairs Subcommission)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SIE</td>
<td>Servizio Informazioni dell'Esercito (Army Intelligence Service)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIM</td>
<td>Servizio Informazioni Militare (Military Intelligence Service)</td>
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<td>SM</td>
<td>Stato Maggiore (General Staff)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SMG</td>
<td>Stato Maggiore Generale (Joint General Staff)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SMRE</td>
<td>Stato Maggiore del Regio Esercito (General Staff of the Royal Army)</td>
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<td>SPD</td>
<td>Segreteria del Duce (Duce's Secretariat)</td>
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<td>SPE</td>
<td>Servizio Permanente Effettivo (Permanent Staff)</td>
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<td>UAC</td>
<td>Ufficio Affari Civili (Civil Affairs Office)</td>
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<td>UCEI</td>
<td>Unione delle Comunità Ebraiche Italiane (Union of Italian Jewish Communities)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UIC</td>
<td>Ufficio Italiano Cambio (Italian Exchange Office)</td>
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<td>USC</td>
<td>Ufficio Speciale Coordinamento (Special Co-ordination Office)</td>
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<td>USSME</td>
<td>Ufficio Storico dello Stato Maggiore dell’Esercito (Historical Office of the Army General Staff)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WiRüAmt</td>
<td>Wirtschaftsrüstungsamt des Oberkommandos der Wehrmacht (Economic and Armaments Office of the German High Command)</td>
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