

RASSEGNA STORICA DEL RISORGIMENTO
Vol. 113, issue 1, January-June 2026

Contents

COVER

Giulio Tatasciore

***Messico e nuvole*. The Sad Face of an Early Nineteenth-Century Historical Atlas**

RESEARCH ARTICLES

Cesare Esposito

The Invention of *Argot*. Lexicons, Narratives and Discourses in the Construction of Modern Criminality

Daniele Taccardi

«Imitate your Forefathers». Ancient History in the Newspapers and Catechisms of the Neapolitan Republic

Marco Foravalle

«Those Famous Colonies». Scientific Missions and Colonial Ambitions in the Voyages of Carlo Alberto's Navy (1836–1840)

SOURCES

Leonardo Tagliabue

Written by him/herself. Slave Narratives between the Abolitionist Movement and Self-Assertion in Nineteenth-Century United States of America

Francesco Luceri

«A Scandalous Event». Politics and Social Practices in the Galatina Revolt of 1862

MAGNIFIER

Carmine Pinto

The Perfect Battle. A Cultural History of Curtatone and Montanara

Conflicts and Politicisation between Revolutions and Counter-Revolution

Clarisse Meykiechel, Martina Sessa, Irene Polimeni

Politics, Diplomacy, Transnational Networks

Cristian De Martino, Justin Mégret

Governance, Institutions, Knowledge

Matthieu Terrier, Clara Chauvel-Thébault, Baptiste Vinot

Networks of Communication, Narratives, Visual Cultures, Memory

Francesco Spera, Bianca Vicario, Silvia Benini

WHAT WE HAVE SEEN

Francesco Biasi

Brigands! Stories and Images from the *Risorgimento* to the Present Day

Christopher Calefati

***House of Guinness*. Beer and Political Violence in Late Nineteenth-Century Ireland**

WHAT WE HAVE READ

Azzarelli 2025 (V. Coco); Bazzani 2024 (A. Poli); Bignami e Minuto 2023 (M. Marianelli); Di Bartolomeo 2025 (H. Rodríguez Vargas); Fogu 2025 (A.C. Lucarella); Gambacorti 2025 (A. Forte); Girardi 2025 (C. Bazzani); Landi 2025 (G. Carrieri); Lo Basso 2025 (A. Bonvini); Luzzi 2025 (C. Esposito); Maione 2025 (F. Biasi); Manfredi 2025 (G. Perelli); Marino 2024 (M. Meriggi); Mastroberti 2026 (R. Giudice); Mori 2024 (A. Mele); Muraca 2025 (I. Polimeni); Pettitt 2022 (G. Panzera); Pinto 2024 (A. Facineroso); Salvatori 2025 (J. Bernardini); Trinchese e Fimiani 2025 (A. Forte)

CONTENTS AND ABSTRACTS

RASSEGNA STORICA DEL RISORGIMENTO
Vol. 113, issue 1, January-June 2026

ABSTRACTS AND KEYWORDS

Research Articles

Cesare Esposito, Scuola Normale Superiore, Pisa

The Invention of Argot. Lexicons, Narratives and Discourses in the Construction of Modern Criminality

The article explores the construction of the criminal imaginary through the category of argot, understood not merely as slang but as the language of alterity. Moving from early modern repertoires, which portrayed *jargon* as the obscure idiom of marginal groups, the focus shifts to the XVIII and XIX centuries. During this period, the concept was renamed as *argot* and was consequently transformed from a burlesque and mocking element into an identity marker of the “other peoples.” The Revolution marked its politicization: newspapers and pamphlets attributed to opponents a dark *argot*, representing them as a criminal sect and thus delegitimizing their political action. Under the Restoration, the same pattern was applied to liberals and *carbonari*, reinforcing the assimilation between subversives and criminals. In the 19th century, both the press and literature (particularly Vidocq’s memoirs) helped fixing *argot* as the emblem of the *bas-fonds*: a secret language that proved the existence of an urban counter-society, organized and menacing. *Argot* thus emerges not as a mere linguistic register, but as a cultural and political device through which crime could be imagined as a separate people – at once real and imaginary.

Keywords: Argot; France; Revolution; Criminal Classes

Daniele Taccardi, Scuola Normale Superiore, Pisa

«Imitate your Forefathers». Ancient History in the Newspapers and Catechisms of the Neapolitan Republic

The essay analyses how antiquity was employed in press and catechisms of the Neapolitan Republic. Similarly to the well-known French context or that of “sister republics” in Italy, in Naples as well, Greece and Rome were primarily a source of

examples for social regeneration, a tool for legitimizing or delegitimizing policies or for managing internal problems. Analogy was useful for interpreting the present and imagining the future with a vision of the revolution as a repetition of history. A distinctive feature of the use of antiquity in the Neapolitan context, however, is the ability to claim a direct lineage from the people of Magna Graecia and the Italic world, almost as if to support a predisposition toward democracy or to claim a certain autonomy from France in the turning points of the Republic's life.

Keywords: Neapolitan Republic; Ancient Greece; Ancient Rome; Revolutionary Press; Catechisms

Marco Foravalle, Scuola IMT Alti Studi Lucca

«*Those Famous Colonies*». *Scientific Missions and Colonial Ambitions in the Voyages of Carlo Alberto's Navy (1836–1840)*

This article examines the global ambitions of the Kingdom of Sardinia between 1836 and 1840, through the study of two naval missions to the Atlantic and South America. By analysing travel diaries, diplomatic correspondence, and the material traces preserved in the Armeria Reale of Turin, this paper highlights the emergence of a colonial mindset that preceded Italian unification. Although these missions produced limited practical outcomes, they reveal how the Sardinian elite sought to emulate the imperial practices of France and Britain, combining scientific exploration, commercial surveillance, and symbolic projection of dynastic prestige. Drawing on recent historiography, the article argues for a reconsideration of Italy's role in the nineteenth-century imperial world.

Keywords: Kingdom of Sardinia; Informal Colonialism; Scientific Expeditions; Material Culture; Diplomatic Relations

Sources

Leonardo Tagliabue, Università di Pisa-EPHE, Paris

Written by him/herself. Slave Narratives between the Abolitionist Movement and Self Assertion in Nineteenth-Century United States of America

Slave narratives, regarded as the origin of African American literature and as a key instrument of the nineteenth century abolition movement in the United States, are examined here as material book objects. The work focuses on their paratextual

apparatus, showing how prefaces and external interventions in the autobiographical writing of Frederick Douglass (1845) and Harriet Ann Jacobs (1861) reveal the plurality of the cultural artifact and the tension between their use as political tool and as medium for self-fashioning and emancipation through literacy.

Keywords: Slave Narratives; Abolitionism; Literacy; Frederick Douglass; Harriet Ann Jacobs

Francesco Luceri, Istituto per la storia del Risorgimento italiano, Comitato di Lecce
«A Scandalous Event». Politics and Social Practices in the Galatina Revolt of 1862

The construction the Kingdom of Italy followed a tortuous path, threatened by centrifugal forces. Historiography has highlighted the legitimist features of these forces, which were more or less deeply rooted. However, other phenomena also existed: politically unstructured movements that were the result of spontaneous uprisings, lacking a clear identity, and perhaps searching for some form of legitimacy. This article analyses one of these rebellions, behind which lies an attempt by various groups to channel these amorphous impulses. In this process, a primary role was played by the new urban notability, which structured new power relations by also exploiting the forces within social discontent.

Keywords: Rebellion; Popular Politics; Notables; National Guard; Social Tension.