

Summary

Alberto Mario Banti
Notes on nobilities in 19th century Italy

Before the so-called «french years», noble estates were characterized by economic, jurisdictional and political privileges. In 19th century Kingdom of Italy, these privileges had disappeared, whereas economic and political relevance of the nobility declined; yet titles were still highly desired by prominent bourgeois. The essay describes some possible meaning of these bourgeois ennoblements and suggests some feature of noble identities in a class society.

Angelantonio Spagnoletti
Lineages of southern nobilities from mid-eighteenth century to the age of Restoration

The paper examines the transformation of the neapolitan nobility between the second half of the 18th century and the first half of the following century. The king Joseph Bonaparte in 1806 suppressed the feudal jurisdiction and the neapolitan landlords were compelled to find an occupation in the civil service or in the provincial and municipal councils. This process continued under the Bourbon kings after 1815 and though the nobility has appointments in the army, court and diplomacy, it lost its identity and the noblemen became civil servants or landowner as well as members of the upper middle class.

Giovanni Montroni
The golden key noblemen

During the Restoration the fragmentation of the nobility that had characterized the previous period, in which there was a high level of conflict among its components, created two distinct alignments: the nobility who participated in the life of the court on the one hand, and the nobility excluded from the court on the other. An obvious attempt to create a new noble tradition was engineered by the court and it indeed achieved tangible results. The dividing line between these two components of the aristocracy is very evident in marriage alliances during the Bourbon period.

Pinella Di Gregorio
Nobility and ennoblement in Sicily in the nineteenth century

The essay focuses on sicilian aristocracy and nobility between *Ancien Régime* and nineteenth century. The author compares the strategies of two families, Moncada and Morillo, the first belonging to the ancient aristocracy, the second to the nouveau riches. The study analyzes the different economic and social positions, the lines of wealth transmission, the political role in the pre- and postunitarian Sicily. In the end of the nineteenth century the nobility was going to lose its class features becoming part of the ruling élite.

Gian Carlo Jocteau
A census of the Italian nobility

The author analyses the work of the Heralds' College, established in Italy in 1869 with the task of giving advice to the government in the matter of nobility and in particular to proceed to the verification and to the recognition of the legitimacy of the noble titles used on the national territory. Therefore between the end of 1800 and the beginning of the 1900 the Heralds' College drew up fourteen regional lists of the noble Italian families, which were published as royal decree and which can be considered on the whole as a census of the post-unitary nobilities.

The article takes into consideration the standards of evaluation used in the list drafting and it gives on regional and national level a first quantitative framing of the data included in the lists. The main problems analysed are: the meaning of the noble distinctions at the time when nobility was juridically reduced as a title; the variety and the heterogeneity of the regional situations; the redefinitions, the discussions and the conflicts that the Heralds' College had to face plus the recognition of the patriciates and the town nobilities, central theme in the Italian context. The author lets his attention linger on the south regions, where the pre-existent habits and traditions were object of intense dispute and dissent.

Franco Mercurio
*Railways and Southern Italy:
«moral bonds» and territorial hierarchies*

The south-italian railway system had not only an economic significance. It played an important political role for the making of the national identity and for the breaking up of old Neapolitan economic and territorial hierarchies. Sometimes these processes happened with the agreement of the local élites and communities, other times they developed in contrast with southern economies and advantages. The research shows the most important moments of historiographical reflections about the southern railways during the second half of XIX century and tries to reconstitute these complex processes on social and territorial planes.

Piero Bevilacqua

Proposals for a laboratory of the present world

This article summarizes the paper given in Serrone (FR), on 23-25 September 1993, by the director of Imes in which he proposed to dedicate a special space, within the Institute, to the history of the last 50 years. According to the author, «contemporary history» by now describes a concluded age. All features that characterized this period of history — between the end of 18th century and the Second World War — have disappeared or changed dramatically: demographic trends, patterns of industrialization, possibilities of social revolution, chances of unlimited economic increase, the capacity of nature to sustain traditional way of exploitation, the ideal and the ideology of progress, and the role of technology in social life. The author proposes many subjects for discussion and research, both in general terms and with reference to the recent history of Italy.