

Igiaba Scego: "It is a monument that attracts fascists, neo-Nazis and neo-fascists like a magnet. I'm talking to you now, but in fact today on the 29th June, there is a gathering in Affile where Rodolfo Graziani is practically commemorated and celebrated. This means that there is a very precise project by the city mayor – a mayor alas, that has won back the election, even with a large majority, more than 60% - to transform this area into a Predappio (Mussolini's hometown), a Predappio of Lazio, a city that's maybe even worse than Predappio itself because the most grimy and cruel fascism is celebrated there. And let's not forget that Graziani was also a member of the Salò Republic (a puppet state of Nazi Germany). Personally, like many others I felt outraged and from the first hour, when on the 12th August when I heard the news, I started to send e-mails all over the world but I was not alone.

The thing that struck me was that before becoming an topic of discussion in Italy, the first article that came out on the Affile issue was in "The New York Times", so not a neighbourhood newspaper or local newspaper, while our "Repubblica", "Corriere Della Sera" (both national newspapers) were enjoying their holidays.

I found this very, very serious and those who rallied the matter - the ones I call 'the usuals' and thank god that there are 'the usuals' - like the Anpi (the national association of the Italian partisans) and people such as Giacometta Limentani who is a Jewish writer from Rome, Alessandro Portelli and many others; Alessandro Triulzi, historians, especially historians and intellectuals; writers such as Maaza Mengiste; myself... Groups of indignant people all of who absolutely want to do something about it.

In addition, to this unified group, a local group constituted by young people who have labelled themselves as "Affile anti-fascist committee" are trying to fight not only against the monument but in particular against the mentality that is in construed within monument.

Personally, I have also made a petition against the monument, which went very well, people from all over the world helped me. I managed to involve Anitav Ghosh who is one of the greatest living Indian writers. In short, thanks to him, many people from the United States have signed the petition. Unfortunately, the monument is still there and I think that there are no other solutions, it should be torn down or seriously modified. The problem is how can we change such a monument that is stained by this story?"

During this summer I contacted the Anti-fascist Committee in Affile, made up of seven people, which was created after the inauguration of the memorial as before that moment it was hidden to the public the reason why that building was constructed. The reason why I contact them was because I wanted to make a public site specific intervention on the memorial, to continue to critically cast light on it, by showing on the walls of the building the film "The Lion of the desert", to recall the attention on the censured film that stages the "butcher Graziani" as one of the main actor.

The answer I got has been quite worrisome. Just one week before two journalists from New York, have come to Affile with the intention of making some footage of the memorial and some interviews, including the Committee and the mayor, with the ultimate goal of making a documentary about the new dawn that Fascism is frighteningly having nowadays (CasaPound, Forza Nuova, and many others) in Italy.

Well, at the sight of these two "foreigners" complete with cameras, one of the memorial "sympathizers" has pouncing with absurd and deranged violence one Committee comrade and afterward the two journalists breaking even the equipment.

The motivation? "You busted our balls by letting foreigners come in Affile".

This e-mail was clearly describing the "strategy of tension" that endures in Affile, a village of 1500 inhabitants, especially since it caught so many outsiders' attention.

After received their answer my first thought was to meet the people from the committee - in a more neutral space - in order to have a direct genealogy on what happened and on the actual state of things. So that at the end of August I took an appointment in Rome with one of the guy of the committee, who gave me his insight on the situation and many information which are not accessible from the media. He also encouraged me going to Affile and assured a guided tour at

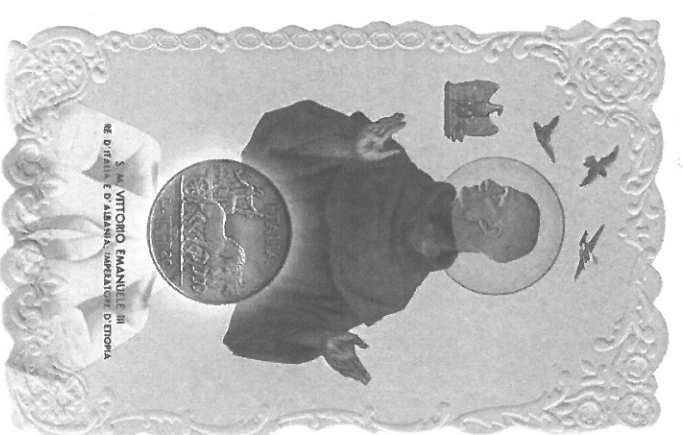


Photo Collage 2013, L'ostia dei popoli (The people's holy bread)

The collage includes different elements such as the Eagle fascist symbol, the 20L. Empire coin (forged in 1936 to honour the Italian Fascist Colonialist Empire right after the occupation of Ethiopia), the plane of a colonial postcard stamp and a St. Francesco holy picture.

Antar Marincola: "Once established in Rome, the Catholic Church needed to expand throughout the world. Colonialism was a vessel. Figures such as the religious missionary, the soldier and the explorer, were the ones who went to conquest the world.

I believe that the Church did what any other power apparatus would do.

It was to colonise a world and it was also to evangelize a world.

So boxes with weapons and other things would arrive, as well as boxes with bibles and gospels, and in some boats there could be a priest; two priests...

To stay out from world current affairs is not possible by the church; the church has always inhabited the world, it does it now and it will always do.

Today we have an Argentinian pope, a significant messenger of Jesuits during the Videla military dictatorship in the Dirty War from '76 until '83. He had a significant role in the junta when many people disappeared, many priests were killed too, and he hasn't told us anything about that so far. So where does the church stand when it's a question of power? The church stands by the power, it will always stand by the power.

The power of colonialism was a relevant one, it has labelled an age, centuries.

The church stands by power, the church is a power."

The scramble for Africa took place between 1876 and 1884, when the European powers, driven by the interests of imperialism, began to devote their attention to the African continent. The industrial expansion required raw materials to elicit and new markets where to sell the products of the industry.