

The Italian Consulate in Jerusalem:

The History of a Forgotten Diplomatic Mission, 1846–1940

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The Italian unification is a long historical process that timidly started in 1815 after the Congress of Vienna and culminated with the creation of the Kingdom of Italy in 1861 and the capture of Rome in 1870.¹ The Risorgimento followed a long and controversial path that brought together people who shared history and culture, but also had been divided for centuries and often involved in bitter disputes and bloody wars. Diplomacy was at the heart of the creation of the Italian state that could not have emerged on its own or throughout war, however, Italian diplomatic missions outside Europe were fairly amateurish and often inconsequential.

This article, divided in three sections, will discuss the establishment of an Italian consulate in Jerusalem, its activities and role from its opening to the end of the 1930s, prior to its temporary closure due to the outbreak of the Second World War. If the first part is substantially descriptive, the second part looks into the massive amount of archival material belonging to the Italian consulate in Jerusalem that was recently discovered and catalogued after having been misplaced for decades in the archives of the Italian Foreign Ministry. The last part briefly delves into a practical example of how this new material may be employed, looking at the Ethiopian community in Jerusalem. The overall aim of this relatively short piece is to bring back to life the history of the Italian consular mission in Jerusalem and, more importantly, to provide historians and researchers with a first overview on new perspectives from where investigating the recent past of the city and of Palestine.

The Consulate

An Italian presence has been visible for centuries in Jerusalem in the form of clergy and pilgrims; however, the size of this community did not match its political relevance, which was overshadowed by British and French consulates and communities, echoing the relative unimportance of Italy on the international stage. The Italian presence in Palestine has been mainly analyzed through three lenses: the history of the Italian religious institutions and personnel operating in the Holy Land; the life of the Jewish community in the Yishuv; and the attitude of Italian governments toward Palestine and, after 1948, their relationship with Israel and the Arab countries.² Few works have been devoted to the study of the political, economic, social, and religious networks established by Italian local authorities and the connections between the consulate and the complex system of power in Jerusalem and the region.³ The lack of historiographical research in Italian and other languages is not only a reflection of the absence of primary sources before the inventory of the consulate records, but also of the tendency – particularly evident in the historiography on Jerusalem and Palestine – to differentiate and separate the subjects of study into a fragmented picture rather than providing an interconnected and wider portrait. This article highlights some of the areas that may greatly benefit from this new material, adding more nuanced approaches and opening new hypothesis to avoid nationalist interpretations, as well as reviewing some historical narratives.

In the only work dedicated to Italian diplomacy in Palestine, Lucia Rostagno was right to suggest that we should bear in mind that from Italy, Palestine was far away and not included in the colonial dreams of the new Italian state and certainly not as a destination for Italian migrants.⁴ At the end of the nineteenth century, Italian interests toward Palestine were mainly devotional. In fact, it can be safely said that little was known of the country: Italian Catholics and Jews did not share the same interest for the Holy Land as their British, French, or American coreligionists.⁵ The re-establishing of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem in 1847 might have had triggered a renewed interest, although available evidence does not suggest this, and in any case the *Terrasanta* was an entity to pray for, not to conquer.⁶ Italy had no connection whatsoever with the local Eastern Catholic churches – a field left open to the French – and the Italian governments saw as the only justification to develop an interest in Palestine the Italian character of the Latin Patriarchate and the Custody of the Holy Land (both the Patriarch and the Custos were in fact Italian subjects).⁷ The Salesians had a substantial impact in Palestine, working with the local inhabitants. Similarly, the Franciscans, by far the largest Catholic group in Palestine, provided jobs and services to local Christians, Muslims, and Jews alike. Politicians and diplomats were still far away.⁸

In 1843, Consul Lenchantin from the Kingdom of Piedmont and Sardinia was sent to Jerusalem to protect the interests of its subjects and to challenge the French protectorate over Catholics.⁹ The material available at the state archives in Turin has been barely perused by scholars and, together with the material recently uncovered at the archives of the Italian Foreign Ministry, may paint a different picture; however, it is safe to say that until 1849 – when the consulate was “temporarily” closed – Italian diplomatic presence

had limited influence.¹⁰ Adolfo Castellinard, the second Sardinian-Piedmontese consul, left Jerusalem in 1849. The seat remained vacant and was filled again only a decade after the Italian unification process was completed.

The newly created Kingdom of Italy could not afford a wide and sophisticated diplomatic network. The lack of trained and trusted diplomatic officials was paired with the imperative of Minister of Finance Quintino Sella to avoid a deficit in the budget of the nascent state. However, members of the Italian parliament were fully convinced of the necessity of opening a consulate in the holy city.¹¹ Eventually, an agreement was made and Vice Consul Alessandro de Rege di Donato was appointed consul in Jerusalem on 15 November 1871. Like his seven successors until the outbreak of the First World War, di Donato had no deep knowledge of the region, or its languages, religions, and peoples. It must be said, however, that the earliest Sardinian consuls had more experience in the region, as both Lenchantin and Castellinard had served as consuls in the Ottoman Empire before their appointment to Jerusalem.¹² It was only in 1911, with the impending Italian invasion of Libya, that the Italian Orientalist Leone Caetani passionately petitioned the Italian parliament and the Foreign Ministry to support the Oriental Institute in Naples as a place to forge young diplomats serving in the East.¹³ Rostagno suggests that consuls had no interest in local society, which never featured in their reports; however, new material may readdress this view and paint a more nuanced picture. A local dimension seems to emerge in the registers of correspondence with Constantinople, as many letters deal with local issues, particularly complaints against petty crime committed by local inhabitants.¹⁴

A major change occurred with the appointment of Carlo Senni in May 1907. Though not an Orientalist, the young consul was a careful observer and in his reports gathered increasing amounts of information about the local communities and their intra- and interrelations.¹⁵ Senni reported on indigenous religious communities at length, offering suggestions on how to engage with them. Some of his comments may look naïve or poorly informed, as he did not possess a deep knowledge of local politics. However, the fact that he was not involved in any major local dispute or in any major scheme to control one or more groups provide a perspective that can contribute nuance to what we know of local politics and dynamics.¹⁶ Senni also provides invaluable information about Jerusalem during the First World War, as he remained in the city until the spring of 1915, reporting on a variety of subjects.¹⁷ As Senni left Jerusalem upon the Italian declaration of war against the Ottoman Empire, it is possible to say that he made the Italian presence in the region more relevant and at the same time brought Jerusalem and Palestine closer to Italy and Italians.

With the end of the war, Senni returned to Jerusalem for a short time, but everything had changed. Now the British were in control and the Italian government was involved in redrawing the Middle East. Despite the increased role of Italian diplomacy, both the British and French marginalized Italy, which they saw more as a nuisance than a challenge.¹⁸ Italian diplomacy, meanwhile, was unable to react quickly to the changes occurring in Palestine. Between 1919 and 1926, seven different consuls led the Italian consulate. Copies of the reports sent to Rome show the lack of diplomatic initiative

and a general superficial understanding of events unfolding in Palestine and Jerusalem, including the emerging national struggle between Arabs and Zionists. This diplomatic weakness was a reflection of Italian politics, as the fascist regime was slowly taking over. It is in 1926, with the appointment of Mario Zanotti Bianchi, that Italian diplomatic efforts became more substantial and visible.¹⁹

Jerusalem and Palestine came to play a more important role for Italian diplomacy and politics. As Mussolini aimed at extending Italian influence over the Mediterranean, Palestine became a battleground against British influence in the region.²⁰ One of the most interesting consuls yet to be fully analyzed is Orazio Pedrazzi. Appointed in February 1927, Pedrazzi was not a diplomat by profession, but a journalist and an expert on Middle Eastern politics. Likely he had a direct line with Mussolini and in his short tenure he emphasized the necessity to work with the Zionists, as they were going to dictate the future of Palestine. Though he was both anti-Zionist and Arabophobe, his main concern was to challenge British rule and thus he lost his job rather quickly. After Pedrazzi left, on the eve of the Wailing Wall riots of 1929, Mussolini changed direction and support for the Arab-Palestinian cause became more visible in terms of propaganda and help lent to local Palestinian elites. It would be interesting to discover in the papers of the consulate in Jerusalem the extent and quality of Italian-Zionist relations, which certainly did not altogether cease.²¹

The man who helped bring some local Arabs to the Italian side was Mariano De Angelis. Appointed consul in 1932, De Angelis served until 1936 and worked publicly and secretly to transform the anti-Italian sentiments among the Arabs into feelings of sympathy. At the same time, De Angelis looked with favor to Jabotinsky and his hardliner Zionists. Though Mussolini never met Jabotinsky, it would be interesting to discover more about this relationship.²² Many works have dealt with the emergence of the alliance between Mussolini and the mufti of Jerusalem, al-Hajj Amin al-Husayni, and it is clear that Mussolini had to adopt different policies in Libya and show a stronger commitment toward the Arabs and Muslims in order to gain his friendship and to transform anti-Italian sentiments. By 1933, De Angelis had a good relationship with the Mufti and we hope the papers available in Rome may give us more details about the ways in which the shift occurred. De Angelis also wrote extensively about the possibility of an agreement between the Arabs and the Zionists and he hoped for Mussolini to become a peacemaker.²³

De Angelis left on the eve of the revolt that lasted from 1936 to 1939 and Quinto Mazzolini succeeded him until the consulate was closed with the outbreak of war between Italy and Great Britain. The years of the revolt marked strong Italian support for the Palestinian cause, but Italian propaganda was ultimately unsuccessful in turning the Palestinians against the British. The example of Radio Bari is illuminating: Arabic-language radio broadcasts targeting Palestine and Transjordan were heavily criticized by the British, who feared the local population's rebellion against the colonial power. But though Arab listeners enjoyed programs in Arabic, it is also true that Radio Bari was not effective in its political mission.²⁴

Hopefully, the material recently found in Rome will help future generations of historians to reassess and rewrite the history of Italian diplomacy in Jerusalem and Palestine. There are multiple questions to be asked to this material, from the international to the intercommunal perspective and from internal Italian politics to intracommunal relations in the region.

The History of the Archival Material

The history of the Italian consular presence in the Holy Land is also the history of the consulate archives and its records. These records had not been catalogued and were located in different sections of the Foreign Ministry archives. In order to inventory the records dating before 1940 and make them accessible to scholars, Open Jerusalem and the Historical Archives of the Foreign Ministry (Archivio Storico Diplomatico del Ministero degli Affari Esteri, or ASDMAE) established a partnership that has led to a range of interventions.²⁵ These included retrieval of the files; analysis of the fonds;²⁶ arrangement and reallocation of the files; envisioning a filing plan; and, finally, drafting a detailed inventory.

The fonds was divided into several deposits: 1936 (concerning records from 1843 to 1926); 1940 (1904-1940); 1974 (concerning records from 1876 to 1963); 1976 (concerning records from 1882 to 1977); 1991 (concerning documents after 1948); 1992 (concerning records after 1873); 1993 (concerning documentation after 1947); 1994 (concerning documents after 1872); and 1995 (concerning records after 1948). The material is located at the Foreign Ministry archives in Rome, in the “Archivio storico consolati” section (F1, F2), and covers around 30 linear meters. Currently, 594 files have been catalogued and inventoried.

In order to trace the history of these papers and how they are now collected in the archives, we need to look at the figure of Quinto Mazzolini, an emblematic politician of the fascist period who served as consul from 16 September 1936 to 20 June 1940.²⁷ In 1940, Mazzolini likely authored a three-volume confidential memorandum: *Palestina e Transgiordania. Cenni storici. Periodo mandatario, possibile assetto futuro*. The document formulated the Italian proposal for the future of the region: Transjordan and Palestine would be united in a federation ruled by King Vittorio Emanuele, who would add to his titles that of “sovereign of Jerusalem.” The future Arab federation would have been put under direct Savoy rule or would have become an independent state under Italian influence, following the model of British relations with Egypt and Iraq. Mazzolini imagined that the Sephardic Jewry could join this Arab federation while no favor was reserved for the Ashkenazi population.

Some studies highlight Mazzolini’s substantial adherence to the traditional pro-Arab position of his predecessors. However, he is mentioned in other sources in relation to the so-called “Jerusalem agreement” between Italy and Zionist paramilitary organizations like the Irgun and the Stern Gang, reached just before Mussolini’s declaration of war on 10 June 1940 and never signed by Italian diplomats.²⁸ This agreement provided that,

in exchange for Italian acknowledgement of Jewish sovereignty over Palestine, the future Jewish state would ally with the Axis powers; moreover, Haifa would become the capital of the new state, while the Old City of Jerusalem would be placed under Vatican authority. The historiographical questions raised by Mazzolini's diplomacy deserve further analysis based on the documents that are currently being inventoried in order to shed light on and possibly rewrite parts of Mandatory Palestine's history.

The relevance of Mazzolini's mandate is not only limited to politics. His contribution is essential for archival reasons: he was the first to deposit the records of the Italian consulate in Rome. During his staying in Jerusalem, Mazzolini actively worked to organize the papers of his office. The first part of the records was deposited in 1936, when he identified the material that he called the "old archive." In 1940, after leaving Palestine, Mazzolini left other papers at the Foreign Ministry. As he had been forced to leave the consulate for security reasons, he tried to preserve part of the records. A cable dated 8 February 1951, "L'archivio del Consolato in Gerusalemme trasferito a Roma" (the Consulate archive has been transferred to Rome), shows the impact of the war on the history of this material. Mazzolini gave the order to partially burn the archive: the surviving list of documents that have been destroyed shows that these records were some of the most sensitive, as they discussed relations with Arabs and Jews. Another part was delivered to the Spanish consulate in Jerusalem, which had assumed the protection of the Italian interests in Palestine, and would have been returned by the Spanish authorities after the end of World War II. Other records were moved to Rome. In all likelihood, Mazzolini sent the missing part of the records to the Ufficio stralcio (the Removal Office, responsible for closing the work of discontinued institutions) to the Foreign Ministry archives in 1945.

The records cover a wide spectrum of topics: educational and cultural institutions; commercial, financial, and political relations; issues of privileges and protection of religious orders; and conflicts among different rites. This new fonds is extremely rich in important sources for reconstructing the relations between Jerusalem's inhabitants and institutions at that time. A first look suggests that the papers of the consular archives can strongly contribute to urban history of Jerusalem. Traditionally, consular sources have been used by diplomatic historians; however, the consular machine involved different professionals, middlemen, and workers, men and women who created a variety of networks, making the consulate more than a diplomatic institution. The image of consulates as separate from the rest of the city changes in favor of a vision suggesting an intricate system of relations: consular sources allow us to overcome the "local versus foreign" dichotomy depicting a multifaceted portrait of the international exchanges in late Ottoman and Mandate Palestine, as well as outlining Jerusalem as a global city.²⁹ The variety of topics treated by the documentation collected in this fonds allows us to reconstruct the life of the consulate, its structure and activities, as well its economic costs. The personnel files clarify the role, conflict, and needs not only of the consuls or vice consuls, but also employees like dragomen and other workers. The difficulty of finding Arabic-speaking interpreters, for instance, appears to be a constant problem for consular officials.

Census records are a unique source to reconstruct the features of the Italians in Palestine. So far, the only detailed data available cover the period from 1935 to 1938. For this period there is a list of the Italians in Palestine and Transjordan, indicating their gender, profession, status (civil or religious), and city of residence; nevertheless, one should be weary of this material, as some minor contradictions emerge at first glance. By 1 January 1935, the Italian community of Palestine was composed of 827 Italian civil nationals, 539 members of religious congregations, 750 colonial subjects, for a total of 2,116 people. The percentage of the colonials and religious subjects was thus significant. The majority of Italians in Palestine resided in Jerusalem (346 Italian civil nationals, 164 members of religious congregations, and 50 Italian colonial subjects). Significantly, the holy city was followed by Jaffa, where 55 nationals and 8 members of religious congregations lived beside 500 Jewish Italian Libyans, in an urban microcosm of mixed identities worth further exploration. The comparison with the data concerning the nearby Tel Aviv is also interesting: 159 Italians lived in the city, with no “religious” or “colonial” figures. Haifa was the third city, inhabited by 235 Italian nationals, 57 members of religious congregations, and 50 colonial Italians.

In Jerusalem, the civil Italian population was mainly composed of artisans (shoemakers, builders, and cooks) but also professionals (doctors, engineers, lawyers) and merchants, as well as functionaries and employees in Italian societies and institutions (the Banco di Roma, the consulate itself and other private companies). Women were generally recorded as housewives or students. Jaffa, by contrast, saw an Italian population mainly constituted of merchants and employees. On the religious population, the data is particularly detailed: the consulate asked all congregations to send a list of their members. This inquiry produced a series of lists of names (both civil and that chosen after vows or ordination), including names of parents, place and date of birth, region of residence in Italy, and date of arrival in Palestine – information that opens research paths for a social history of the Italian religious population in the Holy Land.

By November 1937, the Custody of the Holy Land hosted the largest number of Italians, with 163 brothers or postulants. Preparing this list was in some way a nationalist exercise, aiming at reinforcing the patriotic sense, highlighting Italian roots and pro-fascist attitudes. On 22 November 1937, the secretary of the Custos, Fr Teofilo Bellorini, wrote to Mazzolini that, “while completing [the list of the Italian friars], I couldn’t help thinking about the image of Dante.”³⁰ The material available for 1937 also shows names of employees of the Banco di Roma, their addresses in Jerusalem, and, more importantly, names of the owners of the houses where they lived. Italian companies did not necessarily have Italian personnel: only one of the employees at the Italo-Oriental Tourism Company, for example, was Italian.

The will of the consulate to increase nationalist feelings among the Italian population is evident also in the vast documentation concerning Italian cultural institutions in Palestine. Some files show the transformation promoted by the Education Ordinance of 1933: the Mandatory administration tried to impose common rules on the multifaceted educational landscape in Palestine at the time, in terms of teacher qualifications, numbers of students, and governmental inspections.³¹ Together with the Latin Patriarch

of Jerusalem, Luigi Barlassina, the Italian consulate acted as a spokesperson for religious institutions expressing their resistance to the implementation of common rules. In the end, Catholics, too, were obliged to produce detailed reports and data. The information collected in the school attendance return, for example, provides a fresh snapshot of the number of teachers and pupils and their classification by age group, gender, and religion. Reports prepared by Italian government inspectors also outline transformation in the school population: in particular, the data on Catholic school pupils' religious affiliations shows a shift from a variety of confessions to a marked sectarianization as the most acute moments of the Arab-Zionist conflict approached in the mid-1930s.³²

Another file shows the dissemination of the Montessori educational method in Palestine. Some Jewish teachers attended the courses that the Italian educator Maria Montessori held throughout Europe and the United States and applied her method in some kindergartens in Tel Aviv and Haifa. In the second half of the 1920s, Giovanni Gentile, former minister of education in the Mussolini government, and Mario Montessori, son of Maria, repeatedly wrote to the Italian consuls in Jerusalem encouraging local representation be sent to the Montessori congresses organized around the world.³³ Lastly, another file documents the withdrawal of Italian teachers from Jewish schools after the promulgation of the racial laws in 1938.

An Example: The Ethiopians of Jerusalem

The Italian consular archives provide a glimpse not only of the Italian population, but also of the life of another community: the Ethiopians living in Jerusalem, often called "Abyssinians" in the sources. Traditional historiography presented the Ethiopian Orthodox community in Jerusalem in the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries as a community in danger, isolated and without local support and links. This community was painted as involved in continuous conflicts with Copts, Armenians, and Ottoman authorities. Ethiopians, according to this view, could have been "saved" only by Western intervention through the European consulates in the city. At first the British (from 1850 to 1867), then the French (from 1881 to 1902), and lastly the Italians (since 1885) claimed the role of protector of the Ethiopians, acting as intermediaries between the community and the local government.

This vision was clearly expressed in the minutes of a report by the Italian consul in Jerusalem, Mina, to the Italian ambassador in Constantinople, Count di Collobiano, dated 11 May 1894:

In local religious issues, the Ethiopians do not count and cannot count now as a factor of any relevance. Humble, poor, without effective aid, often divided among themselves, deprived of their ancient sanctuaries, they are not able to exercise any influence or attract any attention.³⁴

This historiographical interpretation is problematic, as it is based mainly on sources written by Western observers. Hence, the need to investigate ordinary life within the Ethiopian Orthodox community, to make visible the social networks they created or relied upon in the city, to hear their voices and not only those of their “protectors.” To this extent, it would be useful to juxtapose the sources gathered in the archives of the Ethiopian Orthodox community in Jerusalem and Addis Ababa with records in other archives in Istanbul, Paris, Nantes, Yerevan, St. Petersburg, and, finally, Rome.

Relations between Italy and Ethiopia became intense from the end of the nineteenth century, after the creation of Eritrea.³⁵ These events generated a mass of documents, including material concerning the Ethiopian community in Jerusalem. The political and religious challenges in the Horn of Africa impacted relations between the Italian consulate in Jerusalem and the Ethiopians living in the city, especially when in 1902, after many years of negotiations with the Ethiopian kingdom and the Ottoman Empire and overcoming French and Russian ambitions, the Italian consulate obtained the right to become the official protector of the Ethiopians. This protection was mitigated by the fact that the Ethiopian residents continued to be under Ottoman rule. Nevertheless, the Italian consul was involved in a certain number of local issues on behalf of Ethiopians, especially those involving real estate.

The Italian archives relating to the Ethiopian community are rich both in volume and the period covered, and its records are essential to reconstruct the daily life of Ethiopians living or travelling to Jerusalem from the late nineteenth century to the 1930s. These files show correspondence between the consulate, the Italian embassy in Istanbul, representatives of the kingdom in Asmara and Addis Ababa, and the Foreign Ministry in Rome, as well as letters sent by Ethiopians in Jerusalem, copies of legal acts signed in Jerusalem, and letters sent from Emperor Menelik II and Empress Taytu. The archives in Rome offer vast documentation on Ethiopian buildings between 1890 and 1910, confirming documents found in other archives. For instance, a bill dated 1896 was collected in the Ethiopian archives in Jerusalem: it is the receipt of the payment to the municipality by the Ethiopian community to use an oven and a garden for the so-called Karno House.³⁶ According to the official history of the community, written by Ethiopian monks in a manuscript preserved in the Jerusalemite archives of the monastery, Karno was the ancient name of the current residence of the Ethiopian archbishop in the Old City in Jerusalem.³⁷ The Italian records clarify that this house was purchased through the intermediation of a *waqf* granted by Jacob Frutiger, a well-known Swiss banker working in the city.³⁸ The Italian purchase of this building on behalf of the Ethiopians raised protests from other consulates and the Ottoman authorities themselves, since Ethiopians were not Ottoman subjects and therefore could not have received this donation from the Italian authorities.³⁹ The Italian consulate was also linked to the Ethiopian community through the use of middlemen, with strong and wide-ranging local links, in order to conduct their affairs in Jerusalem. Beside Frutiger, we find the architect Pascal Seraphin, who also worked as real estate agent. The Italian consulate hired him in 1902 to restore the house bought on behalf of the Empress Taytu (the Ungar House, named after its previous owners, and renamed the Taytu Palace).⁴⁰

After the Italian army's occupation of Ethiopia (1935–1936), the Jerusalem consulate records provide relevant information on assistance to Ethiopians and Libyans from 1936 to 1940. Reports show details of the amount of money allocated by the Italian authorities in order to pay for the medical care of poor and ill colonial subjects, as well as the money assigned to repatriate them. The political use of this economic aid was clear to Italian authorities, who aimed to highlight this benevolent action toward Muslim populations.⁴¹ During the Italo-Ethiopian war, the consulate reinforced a network of espionage to keep Rome updated on the actions and movements of Abyssinian leaders and actively promoted actions of pro-fascist propaganda among the Italian community in Palestine, like in the case of the “Oro pro patria” (“Gold for the Fatherland”) campaign.⁴²

Conclusion

As we saw, the census records, the educational sources, and the Ethiopian documentation are but a few of the various paths that can be explored using material from the Italian consular archives and which contribute to narrating the entangled histories of Jerusalem and Palestine. Italians may have not played a secondary role after all, and a century later, their consulate may prove more influential than ever.

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Although this paper is the result of joint work, Roberto Mazza was the author of the first section (“The Consulate”); Maria Chiara Rioli wrote the second section (“The History of the Archival Material”); and Stéphane Ancel wrote the third section (“An Example: The Ethiopians of Jerusalem”). Rioli also contributed to the third section and coordinated the archival work of Costanza Lisi.

Endnotes

- 1 There is an extensive bibliography on the Italian unification process and its long-term consequences. Here, we suggest: Lucy Ryall, *Il Risorgimento: Storia e interpretazioni* (Rome: Donzelli, 2008); Alberto Maria Banti, *La nazione del Risorgimento: Parentela, santità e onore alle origini dell'Italia unita* (Torino: Einaudi, 2006); Banti, Paul Ginsborg Banti, *Storia d'Italia, Annali 22: Il Risorgimento* (Turin: Einaudi, 2007); Mario Isneghi, ed., *Gli italiani in guerra: Conflitti, identità, memorie dal risorgimento ai nostri giorni* (Turin: UTET, 2009); M. Isneghi, *I luoghi della memoria. Personaggi e date dell'Italia unita* (Rome: Laterza, 2010); Lucio Villari, *Bella e perduta. L'Italia del Risorgimento* (Rome: Laterza, 2009); Giulio Bollati, *L'Italiano, il carattere nazionale come storia e come invenzione* (Turin: Einaudi, 1996); Giorgio Candeloro, *La costruzione dello Stato unitario 1860–1871, Storia dell'Italia moderna*, vol. 5 (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1994); Christopher Duggan, *The Force of Destiny: A History of Italy since 1796* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2008); Giuseppe Galasso and Luigi Mascilli Migliorini, *L'Italia moderna e l'unità nazionale: Storia d'Italia*, vol. 19 (Turin: UTET, 1998); Emilio Gentile, *La Grande Italia: Il mito della nazione nel XX secolo* (Rome: Laterza, 2006); Claudia Petraccone, Aurelio Lepre, *Storia d'Italia dall'unità ad oggi* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2008); Ilaria Porciani, *La festa della nazione. Rappresentazione dello Stato e spazi sociali nell'Italia unita* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1997); Robert D. Putnam, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Italy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993); Christopher Seton-Watson, *Italy from Liberalism to Fascism, 1870–1925* (New York: Methuen, 1967).
- 2 See Giuseppe Buffon, *Les Franciscains en Terre Sainte (1869–1889). Religion et politique: une recherche institutionnelle* (Paris: Cerf, 2005); Paolo Pieraccini, *Cattolici di Terra Santa (1333–2000)* (Florence: Pagnini e Martinelli, 2003); Andrea Giovannelli, *La Santa Sede e la Palestina: La Custodia di Terra Santa tra la fine dell'impero ottomano e la guerra dei sei giorni* (Rome: Studium, 2000); Arturo Marzano, *Una terra per rinascere: Gli ebrei italiani e l'emigrazione in Palestina prima della guerra (1920–1940)* (Genova: Marietti, 2003); Luca Riccardi, *Il "problema Israele": Diplomazia italiana e PCI di fronte allo stato ebraico (1948–1973)* (Milan: Guerini e Associati, 2006); Sergio I. Minerbi, *Il Vaticano, la Terra Santa e il Sionismo* (Milan: Bompiani, 1988); Silvio Ferrari, *Vaticano e Israele dal secondo conflitto mondiale alla guerra del Golfo* (Florence: Sansoni, 1991).
- 3 See: Lucia Rostagno, *Terrasanta o Palestina? La diplomazia italiana e il nazionalismo palestinese (1861–1939)* (Rome: Bardi Editore, 1996); and Andrea Gabellini, *L'Italia e l'assetto della Palestina* (Florence: SeSaMo, 2000).
- 4 Rostagno, *Terrasanta o Palestina*, 12.
- 5 It is important to highlight that, though Italians were not interested in relocating to Palestine, Vatican publications gave significant attention to the Holy Land. It is often hard to differentiate between Vatican and Italian sources, as both were written in Italian and Catholics were split over the loyalty to the state or the church.
- 6 See Paolo Pieraccini, *Il ristabilimento del patriarcato latino di Gerusalemme e la custodia di Terra Santa. La dialettica istituzionale al tempo del primo patriarca mons. Giuseppe Valerga (1847–1872)* (Cairo: Franciscan Center of Christian Oriental Studies, 2006).
- 7 See Giovannelli, *La Santa Sede*.
- 8 Simonetta della Seta, "La Presenza e l'Opera dei Salesiani in Palestina," *Storia Contemporanea* 20, no. 1 (1989): 81–101.
- 9 Archivio Storico Diplomatico del Ministero degli Affari Esteri (ASDMAE) Consolato Gerusalemme, Pacco 1, note written in 1897 with a short history of the consuls in Jerusalem. Details of Lenchantin can be found in Federico Adamoli, ed., *Cronache Marinare* di Giuseppe Alessando Piola Caselli (1843–1883), online at www.piolacaselli.altervista.org/cronache-marinare/Cronache%20Marinare%20con%20Indice.pdf (accessed 16 December 2016).
- 10 Material related to the Consulate of the Kingdom of Sardinia and Piedmont in Jerusalem can also be found in ASDMAE, Consolato Gerusalemme, Pacco 9.
- 11 Rostagno, *Terrasanta o Palestina*, 22–23.
- 12 See Adamoli, *Cronache Marinare*.
- 13 Rostagno, *Terrasanta o Palestina*, 27
- 14 ASDMAE, Consolato Gerusalemme, Pacco 3, Resigter Correspondence with Constantinople 1872–1892. Some miscellaneous registers in the same folder suggest a growing interest in the local economy, as more Italians became interested in opening businesses or dealing with local businessmen. However, the scope of this commercial venture at the end of the nineteenth century was rather small compared to other European countries.
- 15 Details of Carlo Senni can be found online at: notes9.senato.it/web/senregno.nsf/d973a7c868618f05c125711400382868/ea6b98faa6aaa56a4125646f0060866f?OpenDocument (accessed 21 March 2017).
- 16 See ASDMAE, Consolato Gerusalemme, Pacco 8, Local and Foreign Religious Communities.
- 17 See ASDMAE, Consolato Gerusalemme, Pacco 10, various correspondence in relation to the outbreak of the First World War.

- 18 Gabellini, *L'Italia e l'assetto della Palestina*.
- 19 Rostagno, *Terrasanta o Palestina*, 136.
- 20 Nir Arielli, *Fascist Italy and the Middle East, 1933–40* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010).
- 21 Arielli, *Fascist Italy*, 20–21.
- 22 ASDMAE, Ap, Palestina, Busta 13, Roma, 4 November 1935. Jabotinsky's efforts to see Mussolini were refused several times; however, De Angelis wrote a memo suggesting that it was in the Italian government's interests to assist and favor Revisionist Zionism as a form of Zionism clearly opposed to the official Zionism sponsored by the British government.
- 23 ASDMAE, Ap, Palestina, Busta 8, Gerusalemme, 21 Mach 1934.
- 24 Andrea Stanton, "This Is Jerusalem Calling": *State Radio in Mandate Palestine* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2013), 94–101. The history of Radio Bari is also discussed by Arturo Marzano, *Onde fasciste: La propaganda araba di Radio Bari (1934–43)* (Rome: Carocci, 2015).
- 25 See the websites of Open Jerusalem at openjlem.hypotheses.org (accessed 10 July 2017) and ASMAE at www.esteri.it/mae/it/ministero/servizi/uapsds/storico_diplom (accessed 10 July 2017).
- 26 In archival science, a fonds in the aggregation of documents originating from the same source.
- 27 Quinto was the brother of the well-known diplomat Serafino. See Gianni Scipione Rossi, *Mussolini e il diplomatico. La vita e i diari di Serafino Mazzolini, un monarchico a Salò* (Catanzaro: Rubbettino, 2005). Beside the abovementioned work by Nir Arielli on fascist Italy's involvement in the Middle East, see references to Mazzolini in Vincenzo Pinto, "L'Italia fascista e la questione palestinese," *Contemporanea* 6, no. 1 (2003): 93–125; Daphna Sharfman, *Palestine in the Second World War: Strategic Plans and Political Dilemmas* (Eastbourne, UK: Sussex University Press, 2014), 11.
- 28 Joseph Heller, *The Stern Gang: Ideology, Politics, and Terror, 1940–1949* (London: Frank Cass, 1995), 78.
- 29 See Vincent Lemire, ed., *Jérusalem: Histoire d'une ville-monde* (Paris: Flammarion, 2016).
- 30 ASDMAE, Serie CGIG, File 197.
- 31 On education policies in Mandate Palestine see Nehemia Stern and Ela Greenberg, eds., *Preparing the Mothers of Tomorrow: Education and Islam in Mandate Palestine* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010); and Abdul Latif Tibawi, *Arab Education in Mandatory Palestine: A Study of Three Decades of British Administration* (London: Luzac, 1956).
- 32 See the case of the Lampertico school in Jaffa, directed by the Italian congregation of the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (often called in the sources the "Missionary Sisters of Egypt"): "pupils are this year [1937] less than half compared to last year. Of the 180 pupils enrolled in 1935–39 (XIV) only 83 have enrolled so far. The attendees are 74, 2 Italian and 72 locals. According to the religion professed, there are 14 Catholics and 70 Muslims. Since last year 92 Jewish female pupils left as a result of the political tensions in Palestine after the events of 1936 as the school is in a mixed neighborhood with a large presence of Muslims. The events had also a negative impact on the academic achievements that have not been good." ASDMAE, CGIG, File 430.
- 33 On the relationship between Maria Montessori and fascism, see Giuliana Marazzi, "Montessori e Mussolini: la collaborazione e la rottura," *Dimensioni e problemi della ricerca storica* 1 (2000): 177–195.
- 34 ASDMAE, CGIG, File 26.
- 35 On Italian colonialism, see: Nicola Labanca, *Oltremare: Storia dell'espansione coloniale italiana* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2002); Nicola Labanca, *La guerra d'Etiopia, 1935–1941* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2015); Angelo Del Boca, *Gli italiani in Africa orientale* (Rome: Laterza, 1979).
- 36 Ethiopian Archbishop Residence in Jerusalem, Archives section, dossier "yä-leyu leyu guday däreseñño kähiz yegäññalu."
- 37 Ethiopian Archbishop Residence in Jerusalem, Manuscripts section, ms. JE692E, p. 289.
- 38 ASDMAE, Ministero dell'Africa Italiana, lettera del console Carletti al Ministro degli affari esteri, 3 luglio 1903, Gerusalemme, posizione 42–3.
- 39 Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, İstanbul, Dışişleri Bakanlığı, HR.HMS.ISO.176.44.
- 40 ASDMAE, Ministero dell'Africa Italiana, ricevuto per Pascal Seraphin, 20 November 1902, posizione 42–3.
- 41 See the cable/telespresso form n. 1353/544, Vice Consul of Jaffa G. Morcos to General Consul of Jerusalem Mazzolini, 30 September 1938: "It is a pleasure to state that the humanitarian aid provided by this Office has been given large publicity by the Arabs and it has been interpreted as the genuine expression of the disinterested and caring Italian politics toward its Arab-Muslim subjects."
- 42 In November 1935, the League of Nations approved economic sanctions against Italy as a consequence of the invasion of Ethiopia. In order to react against these measures, the fascist government mobilized the population in a massive campaign of gold donation, especially of wedding bands.