

CERS Working Paper

Racism in Italy

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Introduction

This essay will seek to establish an account of racialisation in Italy, and whether the issue of racism is embedded within Italian culture. This will be achieved by exploring how racialisation manifests itself in four areas, beginning with the suggestion that the Italian State is built on racial tensions. Moreover, it could be argued that Italy's genocidal fascist colonialism, particularly concerning Libya, increasingly operationalised a racist vision. This essay will then serve to analyse some of the key ideologies to which this vision was centred upon, including that of scientific and biological racism. Another aspect this paper will analyse is the contemporary issues of racialisation in terms of critical race theory focusing on politics and football. This will explore whether these racialised contexts as a product of the articulation of racism and nationalism in different forms across Italy have generated a racial culture due to their connections with this historical state divide. Finally, this essay will focus on the discrimination faced by both the Roma and Sinti populations in Italy, and migrants in general. After analysing these four prevalent areas concerned with racism, conclusions will be drawn on how far Italy has come with regards to this problem, and whether more improvements need to be made.

The Construction of the Italian State – Racial tensions

Firstly, it is important to establish the historical racial foundations upon which the Italian State is built, as there is a great divide between those situated in the North and those based in the Southern regions. Consequently, this has provided an ideological groundwork for Italian society which is divided by stereotyped racial character traits, associated with the region from which an individual derives from. For a large proportion of the Northern Italian population, the Southerners were seen as a 'lower class', which were unruly and genetically predisposed to crime (Crucio and Mellino, 2010). Not only were this group of inhabitants seen as lazy and impotent, they were also deemed both morally and culturally corrupt due to their closeness to the Mediterranean, Arab and African territories. Consequently, there was a great distinction between the alleged 'whiteness' of the Northerners and the 'blackness' of the Southerners. This hostility is demonstrated through the 'Cafona War', in which the North deployed colonial and paracolonial methods in order to bring the South under its control (Pugliese, 2008). These 'Southerners' based their ideas of southern congenital inferiority in the forms of scientific, biological racism which had been popular at the time (Law, 2014). This notion of 'scientific racism' will be examined in greater depth later in this paper. However, before this, it is important to understand the implications of this racial rule that had begun to influence important governmental decisions across the nation. Not only did this pave the way for segregations and the marginalisation of certain Italian citizens with the country of Italy itself, it has also had wider importance in the fact that it has both encouraged and opened up the process of racialisation for the treatment of other territories, including land in both the Mediterranean and Northern Africa (Law, 2014).

The suggestion that this notion of 'white power' and superiority dictated racial rule amongst Italians could be demonstrated clearly through their Mediterranean colonial encounters. Although the countries' colonial enterprise began in the 19th century, it was arguably only under the leadership of Mussolini and his fascist regime where these ventures were prioritised (Andall and Duncan, 2005). This is because Mussolini was intent on regaining total control of colonial territories and recapturing the African lands of Ancient Rome. Despite claiming his desire for the conquest and control of these territories was justified, it could be argued his methods and treatment of those in these targeted areas had racial motivations. This could be supported by Goldberg, who noted that 'European expansion accordingly rationalized its global spread in racial terms' (2009, p3). Moreover, it was suggested that this expansion was rendered acceptable because this rationalisation through the form of race indicates a degree of legitimacy (Goldberg, 2009).

Despite the claim that Roman ruins discovered within Libya supposedly offered material evidence of Italy's entitlement to recapture these lost lands, the expansion into Africa offered Mussolini the chance to instil national cohesion, as well as the opportunity to project a greater Italy to the outside world (Andell and Duncan, 2005). After signing the 1912 Treaty of Lausanne, the Ottoman Sultan ceded Libya over to the Italians. However, in the early 1920's the Libyans began a resistance movement against the colonization of the Libya by Italian forces. This resistance movement was known as the 'Sanussi' and was led by Omar Mukhtar (Andall and Duncan, 2005). After a few years however, Italy had managed to repress the Sanussi movement and had regained, re-enforced and extended their control over the territory. However, the methods used to gain control were brutal, with a number of concentration camps implemented and the use of chemical bombs which resulted in the death of thousands of Libyan citizens. This is supported by Pappé, who has estimated that in Libya between the years 1928 and 1932, the Italian military killed as many as half of the Bedouin population, an Arabian ethnic group with many clans spread over a number of Middle Eastern countries (2005). The majority of these deaths came either directly or through disease and starvation in concentration camps. It appears Mussolini had jumped on the opportunity to extend the racial laws of metropolitan Italy to Libya (Andell and Duncan, 2005). Therefore, this genocidal fascist colonialism, with its deployment of concentration camps, public executions and use of chemical bombs had increasingly operationalised a racist vision.

One recurring theme evident in Italian culture is the repeated denial of an existence of racism, not just in the country itself, but also with regards to its treatment of other nations during these colonial ventures into North Africa and the Mediterranean. Despite the fact Italian colonialism was much smaller and less far reaching than the British or French, it still took place and led to the devastation of many lives. The forgetting of Italian colonialism has been a feature of debates within Italy in the years prior to these wars. The suggestion that Italians have failed to acknowledge the devastation caused by their actions in these wars is supported by Mengiste, who claims that Italy have gone to great 'efforts to shroud the bloody side of imperial ambition' (2013, p2). Moreover, it could even be argued that in addition to covering up these brutalities in countries such as Libya and Ethiopia, the Italians have attempted to label these wars as a 'civilising mission' and 'pacification campaigns' (Mengiste, 2013). Thus, it appears that there is a large degree of post-war accountability which Italy has failed to acknowledge. Nevertheless, this argument that Italy have failed to take responsibility for its treatment of these nations could be refuted by the fact that in 2009, the country did acknowledge and confirm compensation for colonial damage to Libya (Law, 2014).

It is clear that genocidal fascist colonialism carried out under the leadership of Mussolini increasingly appeared to be operationalised with a racist vision in mind (Law, 2014). This is supported by Andell and Duncan, who suggest that the conquest of Ethiopia during the second Italo-Abyssinian War underlined the racial tensions and distinctions between the 'White Italian soldiers' and the 'African Natives' (2005). Therefore, these Mediterranean and North African colonial ventures appear to have been influenced by the racial rule which had been established in Italy, and by a relatively new premise of scientific racism which was beginning to be promoted around that time in Italy. The next Chapter will discuss this previously unchartered idea of biological racism which had not only begun to sweep across Italy, but had also started to influence governmental decisions both within the country itself and with regards to their colonial decisions.

The impact of Racial Science – how far did it articulate the political discourse of the Fascist State?

Arguably, the document that laid the foundations for the racial policies of the fascist regime was 'The 'Manifesto of Racial Scientists' or the 'Manifesto degli Scienziati Razzisti', a document published by leading Italian scholars in July 1938. The ideology promoted within the manifesto provided very diverse, and often contradictory concepts regarding racial discourse which included, the Nordic Aryan racial identity of Italian citizens, anti-Semitic ideas, anti-Africanism, references to the purity and uniqueness of the Italian race, whilst providing a biological definition of race. Prior to the Manifesto, the notion of Biological racism appeared to have been largely absent from Italian thought, and thus the document should be seen as a decisive moment in the development of racism and Italian anti-

Semitism. According to the Manifesto, human races biologically exist and the majority of Italians were an Aryan race with an Aryan civilisation to which a number of other races did not belong (Law, 2014). This included those of African, Oriental or Jewish dissent. The Manifesto also claimed that this Aryan Race to which the majority of Italians belonged, was more ‘closely related to Germans than North Africans’ (Gillette, 2001, p306). Additionally, this document promoted certain ideas regarding breeding, in order to maintain an alleged physical and psychological purity which was attributable to the Italian race. This involved the banning of sexual relations with any individual who was of non-European race. The prohibiting of these relationships on the grounds of ethnicity is of critical importance, since it shows these racial ideologies being promoted in reality.

In addition, this relatively uncharted concept of biological racism underpinned by this new wave of racial science was being used to justify radical racial laws brought in to target certain groups within Italian society. This series of racial laws, brought in directly after the publication, were enacted across Italy and were aimed at populations who were not deemed to fit the Aryan Race, such as the Jews, Gypsies and Africans. This final section of the Manifesto highlights this, as it is centred on the belief that Jewish people were unassimilable into Italian society, despite the fact that the relatively small Italian Jewish population was widely regarded as the most assimilated in Europe at the time of publication (Gillette, 2001). One of these racial laws focused on restricting the civil rights of Jews with regards to education and work, as it became forbidden to hire Jewish teachers and professors, whilst the services of current teachers and staff at schools were suspended (University of Florida, No Date). These laws also included the prohibiting of Jews from serving in the armed forces and joining the National fascist party, whilst ownership of certain companies was restricted for this group. Despite the imposition of these racial laws clearly showing racism towards those of Jewish origin, Mussolini claimed in 1938 that his ideology was not anti-Semitic and that no laws would be circulated to deny the Jews of their political, moral and economic rights (Pagano, 2011).

It could be argued that there is a distinct degree of relational racism between the Italian state and Germany. This alleged connection between the two nations’ racial policies adopted around the time of the Second World War was arguably inevitable due to the close bond formed between Mussolini and Adolf Hitler, leader of the Nazi regime within Germany. This was epitomized by the Pact of Steel agreed between the two men in 1939, which had serious implications for Italy in terms of racial discourse. This is because Hitler had already envisaged creating a Manifesto to justify his racial hatred on scientific grounds, and this was agreed to by Mussolini which resulted in this 1938 Manifesto of Racial Scientists. Therefore, the Manifesto, which had a degree of correlation with the Nazi Nuremberg Laws, arguably laid the foundations for Mussolini’s racial laws. This would suggest a degree of connectionality between the racial policies adopted in Germany, and the subsequent laws introduced across Italy. Nevertheless, this connectionality could be disputed as it has been suggested that the role of the Germans in the promulgation of Italian laws remained minimal, and that the fascist government both actively and independently made the decision to oppress the Jews (University of Florida, No Date).

Nevertheless, it could be argued that the deracialisation of Italian culture, with regards to scientific and biological racism, has taken great strides in recent years. Firstly, it is important to note that these racial laws were suppressed by the ‘Badoglio’ government upon the death of Mussolini in 1943. In addition, this deracialisation process is arguably encapsulated by the publication of the Manifesto of Antiracist Scientists in 2008 (Mitzman, 2008). This document was published in accordance with Tuscan Regional Council’s annual globalisation-related issue which was to fight all types of racism (Mitzman, 2008). The publication of this new Manifesto was specially commissioned in response to the original Manifesto, and provides evidence that Italy are beginning to acknowledge their racial past. The document was written in the district of San Rossore, where the original manifesto was signed which subsequently formed the basis of these racial laws which targeted the Jewish population amongst other minority groups (Mitzman, 2008). This new Manifesto was not only drawn up as an apology for the actions of the country and its leading scientists’ ideas, it also set about disproving each point of the original Manifesto. It criticised the main belief that race has a genetic or biological basis, and stressed that those who wrote the previous document had based their claims prior to the discovery of DNA. This is supported by Du Bois, who claimed that although race was socially real, ‘it was not based on any essentialist biological or physical difference’ (Law, 2010, p19).

Politics and Football –is there a racial Italian popular culture? Is this linked to the historical racial state?

This chapter will investigate the post-fascist legacy and the degree to which racialised contexts as a product of the articulation of racism and nationalism in different forms historically across Italy have generated a racial culture, which is shown in contemporary society. Two areas that will be analysed in depth are politics and football within Italy, as the use of racist and xenophobic discourse surrounding these issues has been a recurring feature in modern society (ECRI, 2012). The severity of this issue within modern Italian politics has been encapsulated recently by the shocking attacks and threatening behaviour towards Italy's first black minister Cecile Kyenge, who was appointed just last year (BBC, 2013). Moreover, Mussolini's legacy and his fascist ideas remain very evident in one of Italy's most popular cultural practices, which is football. Arguably, racism has always been a feature amongst Italian football. However in recent years, a number of high profile incidents involving racism have caused multiple matches to be abandoned within the country (ECRI, 2012). The fact that these racial problems are continuing to surface so regularly and in these high profile cultural disciplines of politics and football would suggest that this historical racial rule that guided fascism is still embedded to an extent within large parts of Italian society. This chapter will analyse the degree to which the post-fascist legacy in Italy has survived, and whether these issues have been reflective of the increasing racialisation of Italian society in general.

This increasing racialisation of Italian society is evident through the current state of politics within the country. According to the latest ECRI Report published on Italy, the use of xenophobic and racist discourse in politics has seen an increase, with a number of groups being targeted, including, Africans, Muslims, Roma, asylum seekers and migrants in general (2012). Politicians across Italy are often guilty of marginalising certain groups which have been inherently stereotyped by this historical racial rule. This is suggested by Baussano, who points out that the word 'zingaro', which means gypsy, is 'often used by people and politicians in a disparaging sense, and it is often followed by insults' (2011, p33). Furthermore, this xenophobic and racial discourse often reflects or leads to discriminatory measures and policies, as these factors fuel racial discrimination and provides 'legitimacy to these phenomena' (ECRI, 2012, p8). This can be witnessed as recently as 2008, when the Italian government introduced some emergency decrees such as the Nomad Plan, which was aimed at Roma and Sinti groups, purely on an ethnicity basis (Baussano, 2011). Thus, there is evidence to suggest that political decisions have also been influenced by this historical racial tension and have led to the segregation of certain minority groups. This suggestion will be explored further in chapter 4.

This racialisation process could also be highlighted by the case of Cecile Kyenge, who has been the target of a number of high profile racially motivated attacks since her appointment as a minister in April 2013 (Withnall, 2013). Not only is Kyenge the only black cabinet minister within Italy, her appointment was deplored by those of the Rightwing Northern League (Hooper, 2013). Not only has she been compared to an orangutan by a former government minister, she has also been likened to a prostitute by a deputy mayor and had bananas thrown at her whilst giving a speech at a political rally (BBC, 2014). The level of protest caused by Kyenge's appointment has not only shed light on Italy's contemporary problem with regards to racial tolerance, it has also been questioned whether the level of racial abuse suffered by the minister has stemmed from the country's failure to live up to and acknowledge its racial past (Mengiste, 2013).

However, it must be noted that it is not just these one-off, isolated cases that illustrate how this racialisation process grounded by historical racial rule has operationalised itself within politics and popular culture across Italy. Certain political parties that exist within Italy, such as the 'Lega Nord' have continued to act upon the historical racial divide that has plagued the nation. This is suggested by Foot, who claims the party has concentrated on an anti-southern-Italy stance, with its heartland in the provinces of Northern Italy (Foot, 2013). Moreover, it has been suggested that the 'Lega has always been a racist party, fanning the flames of ethnic and religious conflict whenever it has been able to' (2013). Nevertheless, despite this clear racial link, the political parties' electoral trend since 2008 has been extremely positive and has even managed to expand its influence into a few Southern regions, where it is historically far less established (Passarelli, 2013). It may be the case that there exists a certain degree of correlation between this increasing membership of radical parties such as the

Lega Nord which advocate the break-up of Italy, with the fact that ‘sites and discussion groups with racist contents have, in fact, increased 50 % between 2007-2010’ (Baussano, 2011, p41). In addition, it could be argued that this racialisation process is not just operationalised through radical parties such as the ‘Lega Nord’, but also by the general political spectrum across Italy. This could be highlighted by the fact that there have been a number of high profile racially motivated incidents in recent years which have not been recognised in the mainstream Italian media and political discourses as racist attacks (Crucio and Mellino, 2010).

Although being slightly more detached from the Italian State, the leniency and tolerance of issues involving racism within Italian football in recent years shows that Mussolini’s post-fascist racial legacy is still widely evident across the nation. If racism is still rife amongst one of Italy’s most popular cultures, football, it raises the question whether the ideology of the country with regards to racial rule has changed that significantly since the days of Mussolini’s rule. There has been numerous initiatives introduced launched in order to combat these racial incidents, including public awareness campaigns to a system of fines (Bandini, 2013). However, this problem is not improving particularly, and it is essential that harsher penalties are introduced to eradicate this issue. This could involve deducting points or even suspending teams whose fans are causing these problems.

One particular case that could show that these anti-Semitic beliefs and ideologies are still held by many, including high-profile players, involves the case of the Italian national goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon, who once appeared in Rome’s Olympic Stadium with the number 88 on the back of his jersey (Testa and Armstrong, 2010). It is widely believed that the number is used as a code of identification among neo-Nazis, as ‘H is the 8th letter of the alphabet, so 88 is taken to stand for HH which in turn means ‘Heil Hitler’, the proclamation of the Waffen SS’ (Testa and Armstrong, 2010). It is also interesting that this incident occurred in Rome, as the city was re-born during the years of Mussolini’s rule and was regarded the bureaucratic capital of the Italian State, a key component in the growth of the fascist regime (Testa and Armstrong, 2010). If this alleged show symbol of racism is true, the fact that a leading Italian sportsman who is idolized by many can openly support these radical racial ideas illustrates the severity of this issue as a contemporary problem in the country. Nevertheless, these claims have been strongly refuted by the man himself, who stressed that this was not the motive for choosing this particular shirt number. Nevertheless, it raises the question as to why the same man, during 2006, posed in front of a statue bearing the Celtic cross (a symbol with neo-fascist resonance) and the words ‘*Fiero Di Essere Italiano*’, which translates to ‘Proud to be Italian’ (Testa and Armstrong, 2010).

Sharpening segregation evident in policies towards immigration

Finally, it could be argued that the Italian policy on immigration has been influenced by this historical racial rule that has been embedded within Italian culture for a number of years. This is suggested by Crucio and Mellino, who claim the ‘institutional and popular racism against southern people within Italy historically, combined with similar treatment to colonial others, has arguably contributed to the contemporary racialisation of internal migration’ (2010). This racialisation concept is one that is highly saturated with the colonial and imperial legacy of race, and can be used to describe the economic and cultural processes of discrimination and segregation that is of symbolic and material violence, to which certain groups in both Italy and across Europe are subject to (Crucio and Mellino, 2010). This is suggested by the ECRI Report published in 2012, which pointed out that most of the Roma population in Italy have experienced ‘severe marginalisation and discrimination, whether in terms of access to housing or to other social rights such as education, employment and health’ (2012, p8).

This suggestion the racialisation process contributing to the segregation of certain groups that has been highly saturated with and colonial and imperial legacy of Italy can be demonstrated by the marginalisation of the Roma. This is supported by Pagano, who points out that ‘racism against Roma is still present in today’s Italian society’ (2012, p5). The authorities estimate that there are approximately 150,000 Roma and Sinti currently residing in Italy (ECRI, 2007). A large proportion of these groups are Italian citizens who belong to groups which have lived in Italy for centuries, thus it seems unjust that such groups are targeted (ECRI, 2007). Nevertheless, there are numerous anti-Romani stereotypes and prejudices which exist currently surrounding the Roma population (ERRC,

2000). This is partly because the Roma gypsies defy the conventional definition of a population as they traditionally have no nation-state, tend to belong to many religions, speak different languages and comprise of numerous socially and culturally divergent groups separated by strict rules of endogamy (Sigona, 2005). This group are deemed by many as a racial threat to national stability. This alleged ill-feeling towards this vulnerable group could be highlighted by an opinion poll conducted in 2008 and cited by the European Network Against Racism (ENAR) which found that as many as 70% of Italians would like to banish the Roma population from Italy, despite the fact over half of this group are Italian nationals (ECRI, 2012).

In addition, these prejudices against the Roma are frequently ‘reflected in, or reinforced, by the attitudes and policies adopted by politicians’ (ECRI, 2012, p8). This is supported by the ECRI report 2012, which cites that the use of racist and xenophobic discourse in politics appears to be increasing, targeting Blacks, Africans, Muslims, Roma, Romanians, asylum seekers and migrants in general (ECRI, 2012). In the case of legal settlements, the dominant practice is still to relegate Roma to settlements in poor locations which can create major problems for the integration of this group (ECRI, 2012). It has also been suggested that this racialisation has had implications for Italian migrants.

Migrants in Italy make up a substantial proportion of the total population, with over four million that have a stay permit. This is suggested by Crucio and Mellino, who point out that there is a great deal of intolerance at work on a daily basis, against any kind and class of migrant people (2010). This is supported by the ENAR Shadow report for Italy noted that there appears to be a distinction in wages depending on ethnicity, whilst ‘34% of foreign workers are employed as unskilled workers compared with 8% of the majority population (Baussano, 2011, p21). Moreover, in the past, there have been a number explicit racial practices, including racist attacks or murders which have been translated by social agents and mainstream media and political discourses as simply problems related to migration and identity Crucio and Mellino, 2010).

On 16th May 2006, the Council of Europe’s European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) made public its third Report on Italy (ECRI, 2007). The ECRI in its previous report had recommended that a comprehensive policy to advance the situation of the Italian and non-Italian Roma and Sinti populations across a wide range of areas and to counter discrimination against them, be carried out at national level (ERCI, 2007). Unfortunately, the Report illustrated that ‘there has been no progress towards the establishment of such a policy and that there is no meaningful co-ordination of or support for the action taken by the regions in these fields at the National level’ (ERCI, 2007, p1). The Report also highlighted that the Italian authorities had failed to implement many of the recommendations it made earlier in the Second Report (ECRI, 2007). This would again suggest that the situation regarding racism in Italy, particularly with concerned with the treatment of migrants is failing to improve. Unless this on-going racialisation process slows down and leading figures within the country accept that a degree of institutionalised racism exists within the nation it is difficult to see the position of those segregated improving.

It has been reported that as many as 20,000 Roma children under 12 years of age, virtually all non-citizens from the Balkans and Romania, are at present outside the compulsory school system (Baussano, 2011). However, it could be argued that this problem is being sufficiently addressed by the Ministry of Education, who in co-operation with Opera Nomadi, a voluntary sector organisation have signed a protocol to change this (ECRI, 2012). Moreover, the Ministry of Education has held training seminars for teachers and auxiliary staff in schools, focussing on techniques to promote the inclusion of Roma children in classes and how to promote integration at for these children whilst they are there (ECRI, 2012). Nevertheless, this could be countered by research which suggested that the City Council of Rome have failed to propose substantial initiatives for the inclusion of Roma children into the education system (Pagano, 2012). Moreover, the ECRI report notes that decisions by non – Roma parents to move their children from schools attended by Roma children has resulted in classes in some schools being left with Roma children only (2007). Thus, it could be argued that there is a degree of correlation between the position of Roma children within the current Italian education system and that of the Jewish children, who found themselves marginalised and segregated after the series of racial laws that were introduced into the country in the late 1930’s. If this is the case, it would indicate that institutional racism within the education sector in Italy, which was built upon the ideology promoted by racial science, still occurs. Nevertheless, it could be argued that this comparison is unjust and that the correlation between these targeted groups is minimal, as Roma children have never been directly

banned from attending school, unlike many Jewish children who were completely excluded by the racial rules introduced under Mussolini's Fascist state.

In May 2008, the Italian government issued the 'Nomad Emergency Decree', which called for the undertaking of extraordinary measures to alleviate the dangers that these camps posed to public security. Consequently, the Italian state forcefully carried out the eviction of a vast number of Roma by destroying camps situated at the outskirts of large cities such as Naples, Rome and Milan (Radu, 2011). This policy on housing carried out by Rome's Municipal authorities has been described as a 'discriminatory two-track assisted housing system that is denying thousands of Roma people access to adequate housing' (Amnesty, 2013, p7). This is because the assisted housing system is being implemented in a way which condemns a vast number of Roma purely on ethnic grounds to live in segregated, substandard accommodation in camps which are far away from services and residential neighbourhoods (Amnesty, 2013). Campaigners have claimed that this is the latest in a long list of governmental policies that have discriminated against Roma people in the country (Leeming, 2013). In March 2012, the UN committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), in its concluding observations on Italy stated that they were concerned that the Roma, Sinti and Camminanti populations were being marginalised through these housing systems and forced to live in camps that were lacking basic facilities (Amnesty, 2013, p10). Nevertheless, a court in Rome has found this census aimed specifically at people of Roma origin constitutes illegal discrimination (Hermanin and Kostas, 2013). For on 26 May 2013, an Italian court ruled that these emergency powers granted by the Italian Government used to compel Roma in five cities to move to segregated special housing in camps on the outskirts of cities was against the law. This is because they believed that the Roma census involved a determination based on ethnic grounds, and resulted in a violation of the personal dignity of the persons identified, and damage to their reputation (Hermanin and Kostas, 2013).

Therefore, with court rulings such as this, along with recent improvements including the setting up of an Observatory on Xenophobia and Racism by the Parliament, it appears that some progress with regards to the deracialisation of Italy is being made (ECRI, 2012). This could be supported by the fact that the percentage of students with an immigration background in Italian schools has significantly increased in recent years. In the school year 2007-2008, the number of foreign origins students reached 574,133 (Baussano, 2011). In 2008-2009, the number increased to 629,000 and to 673,592 in 2009-2010 (Baussano, 2011, p24). Nevertheless, the total amount is still far from the Government's provision that foresaw that the number of foreign students would have risen to 1 million by 2011 (Baussano, 2011). Moreover, despite these improvements, the report concludes that the situation has barely changed in recent years (ECRI, 2012). In order for this deracialisation to progress, it is important that there is more close-coordination between the various levels of public authorities in their work against fighting racism. This paper has identified some new insights into the pool of understanding around racial discourse within Italy, which should in turn contribute in a small way to the new developing global race theory that is currently patchy and unsystematic.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it appears that racism is, to some extent, embedded within Italian culture. Not only was the Italian state built upon historical racial tensions internally, the racialisation of Italian society has appeared to govern their colonial ventures into both North Africa and the Mediterranean. This racial rule appears to have been guided by the concept of biological racism which had become prominent under the rule of Mussolini's fascist Italian state. Moreover, there is evidence that this racialisation has continued to manifest itself within contemporary society through the discourses of politics and football. Thus, although Italy has made some progress with regards to accepting their historical racial past, encapsulated by the publication of an Antiracist Manifesto in 2008, as well as a degree of acceptance for their colonial damage, there is still a long way to go. The discrimination and marginalisation of the Roma and Sinti populations in particular, emphasize that racism is still tolerated across many parts of the country, whilst the racialisation of Italian culture is still evident across political discourses. Therefore, whilst it appears that Italy is making some progress with regards to the deracialisation of the country, this transformation is very slow.

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